BHIKKHUNI VERSION

Lotus Heart

The Path of Purity

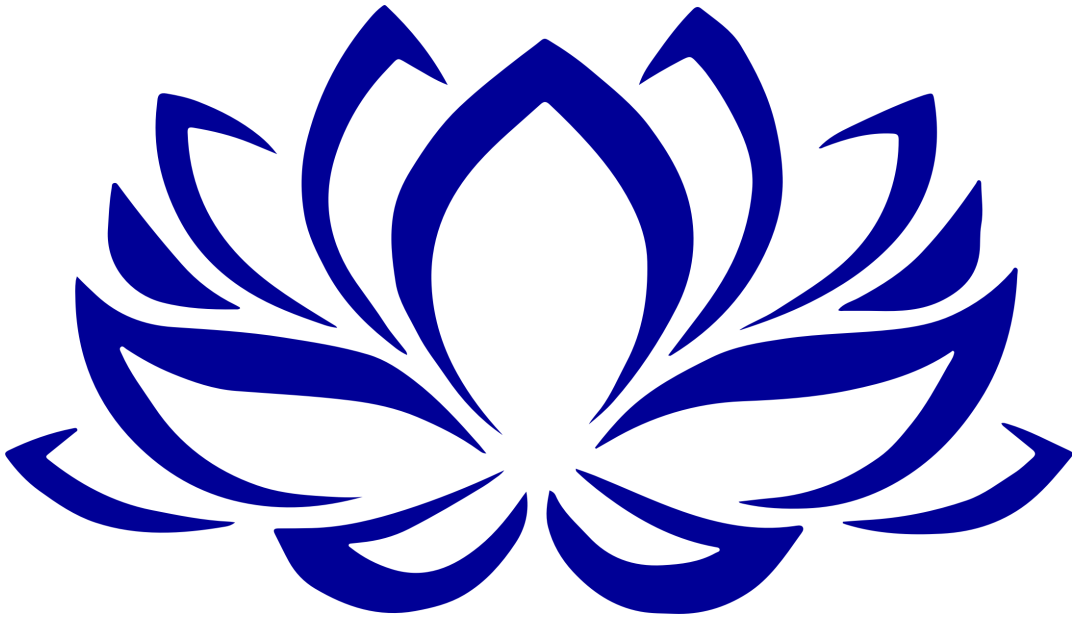
A brief, versified interpretation of Buddhaghosa's 'Visuddhimagga'

Based on the English translation by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli

Inspired by the teachings of Lama Choedak Rinpoche

Adapted and versified by Marcus Henry

2nd Edition - 2026



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'Lotus Heart – The Path of Purity' was written entirely without the use of AI.

Note on the use of Pali / Sanskrit

In seeking to tread a middle way, both Pali and Sanskrit words have been used. Pali has been retained for the original titles of the three main parts – Virtue (Sīla), Concentration (Samādhi), and Understanding (Paññā) – as well as for place names like Sāvatthì and words like bhikkhu. On the other hand, Sanskrit renderings have been used for words like karma, dharma, Nirvana, and Mount Meru.

Note on the Content

This adaptation is very concise and very selective – vast sections of the original text have been either skipped or barely mentioned. There are three main reasons for this – my current lack of understanding in those areas, the difficulty of rendering them in verse and finally, to keep everything within parameters that are relatively manageable and accessible.

"Conditioned things are only fleeting -
Prone to rise and pass away"

https://lotus-heart-path-of-purity.mystrikingly.com/

To the unsurpassed Awakened One
The Truth transcendent, thus passed down
The conquering Companions
In refuge
I and all living beings
Equal to limitless space
Bow down

I humbly set myself this task
To set the Sage's words in verse
Elucidating, thus, the Path
Of Purity, the best by far

Though this is but a tiny morsel
In the Glorious Feast of Dharma
May it yet be nourishment
For others needing sustenance

And though I'm poor in understanding
Faith may grow a little while -
For others who these words do see
May profit just as much as me

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Notes on the Verse

The genesis for this project arose some time after I started watching Lama Choedak Rinpoche's readings of the *Visuddhimagga* on YouTube in August 2024. The text proved to be quite dense and filled with specific terms that I was not yet familiar with, but I noticed that it was also interspersed with stanzas of verse where the translator, Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, had tried to render the original Pali verses in English. As spoken by Lama Choedak, those random stanzas were very pleasant on the ears, and seemed to lend a lot more clarity to what was otherwise proving to be a difficult text to get my head around. For this reason, I soon found myself wondering what it would be like if the entire text was written in verse. After trying out a few verses from the beginning of the first chapter, the project then seemed to snowball from there. Of course, doing the *entire* text proved to be impossible for a number of reasons (see 'Note on the Content' on the licensing page), but the final result is a rough distillation of what I think is the main gist of the *Visuddhimagga* (*The Path of Purification*), and has proven to be very useful as a study aid, if nothing else.

As regards the verse itself, 'Lotus Heart' was written using trochaic tetrameter, as in the witches' invocation from Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (with stressed syllables in bold):

> ***Dou**ble, **dou**ble, **toil** and **trou**ble;*
> ***Fi**re **burn** and **cauld**ron **bubb**le.*

However, in 'Lotus Heart,' the use of this metre is very flexible (or fluid) because one of my aims was to produce something that could technically be recited (or chanted) from beginning to end without a break. Hence the first syllable of each line is not always stressed, as in:

> ***While** the **Budd**ha **was** a**bid**ing*
> ***At** Sā**vatt**hì, **thus**, it **seems***
> *A **cert**ain **dei**ty in**quir**ed*
> ***As** to **his** un**cer**tain**ty***

This fluidity enables the metre to continue between stanzas, so that if the final syllable is stressed (as in the case above), then the first syllable of the next stanza will be unstressed, and vice versa. Not only does it continue between stanzas, but between chapters as well.

In some cases, the verses are modified versions of Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli's own verses, as in:

> *"The inner and the outer tangle*
> *We are lost within confusion*
> *Blessed One, help us unscramble*
> *Who can pull apart delusion?"*

This is an adaptation of:

> *"The inner tangle and the outer tangle—*
> *This generation is entangled in a tangle.*
> *And so I ask of Gotama this question:*
> *Who succeeds in disentangling this tangle?"*
>
> (*The Path of Purification,* Chapter I, 1)

Most of the verses, however, are renderings of the prose, including selections from Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli's notes and in some cases from external sources (e.g. the sutras).

And finally, a note on the rhyme scheme, of which, essentially, nothing is fixed. It is, of necessity, a 'floating' rhyme scheme. And while I have tried to incorporate rhyming patterns into the verse as much as possible, there are significant sections where there are no rhyming words at all. In those cases I am depending on the momentum of the metric rhythm to maintain the poetic effect, and thereby (hopefully) transmit a faithful glimpse of what is one of the most sincere, profound and deeply persuasive expositions of the Buddhadharma I have ever come across.

M.H. – Japan

Abbreviations of Works Cited

In the text, relevant works are indicated in superscript after the quoted excerpt, except in cases where a source is not provided in the *Visuddhimagga* and/or I can't trace it myself

A	Aṅguttaranikāya
Ap	Apadāna (Khuddakanikāya)
D	Dīghanikāya
Dh	Dhammapada (Khuddakanikāya)
Dhs	Dhammasaṅgaṇī (Abhidhamma)
It	Itivuttaka (Khuddakanikāya)
J	Jātaka
JA	Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā
M	Majjhimanikāya
MA	Majjhimanikāya Aṭṭhakathā (Papañcasūdanī)
Mil	Milindapañhā
Nd	Niddesa (Khuddakanikāya)
Paṭ	Paṭṭhāna (Abhidhamma)
Ps	Paṭisambhidāmagga (Khuddakanikāya)
Ptk.	Peṭakopadesa
S	Saṁyuttanikāya
Sn	Suttanipāta (Khuddakanikāya)
Thag	Theragāthā (Khuddakanikāya)
Ud	Udāna (Khuddakanikāya)
Vbh	Vibhaṅga (Abhidhamma)
Vin	Vinaya Piṭaka
Vv.	Vimānavatthu (Khuddakanikāya)

Of things that from a cause arise
The cause thereof, the Sage has told
And how they cease, that too, he tells -
This is the Doctrine of the Wise

The elder Assaji to Śāriputra (Upatissa)

If one is skilled at wise reflection
Arhatship can be attained, then
Even just by listening to
The raving words of drunks and madmen

From 'Buddhadhamma,' Chapter 19

Part 1: Virtue *(Sīla)*

1 – Description of Virtue

While the Buddha was abiding
At Sāvatthì, thus, it seems
A certain deity inquired
As to his uncertainty -

“The inner and the outer tangle
We are lost within confusion
Blessed One, help us unscramble
Who can pull apart delusion?” [s]

‘Tangle’ is the net of craving
Laced together, like a network
As of branches in a thicket
Winding in and out among

The objects, thus, of consciousness
Beginning with the visible
And it’s the ‘inner and the outer’
Then, because it thus arises

As the craving for the needs, then
Of oneself and, thus, another’s
And one’s person and another’s
And the inner and the outer

Faculties of consciousness -
So “We are lost within confusion
Who can pull apart delusion?”
The Enlightened One replied that

“Those in virtue, deeply rooted
Sisters ardent and astute
Who nurture mind, and understanding
Will emancipate this tangling” [s] -

So my task, now, is to set out
Of these words, their truest sense
Of perfect virtue and the rest
As spoken by the Greatest Sage -

There are within his Dispensation
Those who seek renunciation
Yet their purity is swayed
Without right knowledge of the Way

For virtue and the other two -
The purity they're leading to
Are hard to find, and though they strive
For some, no insight does arise

To them I shall expound the Path
Of Purity, the best by far
If, thus, you're yearning to be free
Then harken to my commentary -

Formations are impermanent
To see it thus is paramount
For those who give up fantasy
Are on the path to purity -

"From deeds, right view, intentions wise
And virtue, the sublimest life -
From these will come eternal health
And not from lineage or wealth" [M] -

For those possessed of virtue, stable
Who have wisdom, concentrated
Earnest, diligent as well
Will cross the floods that lead to hell

Just as a massive, solid stone
Remains unshaken by the wind
So too, in face of praise and blame
The wise immovable remain

The currents in the world that run
By means of mindfulness are stemmed -
To stop these currents at one's will
With wisdom only are they stilled

Yet what is virtue, in what sense
Can we define its virtuousness?
How does it function and appear
And by what cause is it revealed?

Just as the essence of our vision
Is of colour, light, and form
The composition of our actions
Is of acts, resolve, and more

The base of it is, thus, creation
Separated into portions
Just as sight has varied data
Separated into parts

A function with a double sense
Of warding off misconduct, and
Achievement of the quality
Of blamelessness in virtuous nuns

Now, virtue, so say those who know
Itself as purity will show
Thus, manifesting in itself
In body, voice, and mind as well

And for its nearest cause they say
That shame and conscience are the way -
When shame and conscience thus exist
Then virtue rises and persists

But in the case they don't exist
It neither rises nor persists -
So what, then, are its benefits?
Its assets are the acquisition

Of the special qualities
Beginning, thus, with non-remorse -
"For non-remorse is the objective
Of constructive habits, then

And those who are possessed of virtue
Gather wealth through diligence
Their high regard then spreads abroad
They have no fear or hesitation

Or confusion when they die
And on their breakup after death
They reappear karmically
Within a happy destiny"[D] -

Dare anyone a limit place
On benefits that virtue makes?
Without such virtue, nuns will find
No footing in the Buddha mind

No Ganges, and no Yamuná
No Sarabhú, Sarassathì
Or flowing Aciravatì
Or noble River of Mahì

Not one of these can cleanse the stain
In all, within the world, that breathe
For only virtue's water can
Wash out the flaws in living beings

No breezes bringing monsoon rain
No balm of yellow sandalwood
No necklaces besides, or gems
Or soft effulgence of moonbeams

Can here avail to calm and soothe
The fevers of this world, meanwhile
This noble, this supremely cool
Well-guarded virtue quells the fire -

Where can any scent be found
That can with virtue's scent compare
And one that's borne against the wind
As though it rides upon it, where

Can such another stair be known
That climbs up to euphoria
Or yet another door that shows us
To the City of Nirvana?

Though they glow, there are no queens
Adorned with glittering precious things
That shine as does a nun restrained
With virtue's ornaments arrayed

For virtue wholly does away
With dread of guilt, and all self-blame
And virtue to the virtuous
Bestows its gladness by its fame

From this brief sketch it may be seen
How virtue brings reward, and how
This root of all good qualities
Robs every fault of all its power

Those who cultivate non-virtue
Visit not the ones with virtue
In their ignorance they see
No fault in a transgression here

Delusion often in their mind
Their faculties are left behind
Thus, virtue in such constitutions
Will partake of diminution -

She whose mind is satisfied
With virtue that has been applied
Yet never tries to activate
The urgent need to meditate

Content with mere virtuousness
Without a higher consciousness -
Her virtue bears the appellation
Which partakes, then, of stagnation -

She who, full of virtue, strives
With concentration in her sight
That sister's virtue in its function
Thus partakes of great distinction -

Who finds virtue not enough
But has dispassion for her goal
Her virtue through such aspiration
Will partake of penetration -

"Mind can't see without an eye
Nor can the eye perceive an object
And yet through impingement, thus
Of door and object, one can see

By means of the eye-stimuli
That is the base for consciousness [1] -
To say we see an object's like
The phrase 'I shot her with my bow'" [Ud] -

Not apprehending, thus, the signs
Of beauty, man, or woman, then
The wise who know what they perceive
Will stop at what is merely seen

Just like the sister on the road
Who saw a youth in fancy clothes
Yet in her mind his teeth were bones
And putrid foulness his abode

She comprehended not at all
If it was girl or man she saw
And standing on that very spot
That nun became an Arahat -

Thus feelings, too, when they arise
Must not be licensed to abide
So she who lives in moderation
Surely aims for liberation

Shunning sloth and boredom, too
As medicine, she eats her food
With four or five lumps still to eat
She stops, drinks water, and retreats

Her strength and energy will rise
As comfort, bodily abides
And in this moderate condition
Is immune from all affliction -

As a hen will guard her eggs
Or thus a maid her darling child
Just so, your virtue please protect
With vigilance, both day and night

Maintain your conduct without taint
Renouncing life, if there be need
Instead of breaking your restraint
The Greatest Sage has thus decreed -

“Remember, mindfulness is key
In guarding all your faculties
‘Tis better for a spike on fire
To pierce your eye, than sense desire” [s] -

“And likewise with the other senses
Guard them with your strict defences
When these doors are left unguarded
Soon by thieves they will be raided

In a house that is ill-roofed
The rain comes leaking in, so too
Will lust come pouring in, you'll find
Upon an undeveloped mind -

You must clamp down on all your senses
Guard them with your strict defences
When these doors are truly guarded
Then by thieves they can't be raided

In a house that is well-roofed
No rain comes leaking in, so too
No openings for lust, you'll find
Within a well-developed mind" [Dh] -

"I am a-fire with hot desire
And burning flames consume my mind!"
In shame, the sister cried aloud -
"How can I douse the flames for good?"

To this the Wisest One replied -
"That burning flames consume your mind
You do perceive mistakenly
For if you gaze more carefully

You'll see that beauty has no sign
Instead of that which forms desire
See foulness there, and keep your mind
In concentrated harmony

And know that there is naught to see -
Formations are not part of us
Nor form, nor self, and so this lust
May be extinguished - thus, no more

Will fire arise for evermore" [S] -
Oh, let her not be hungry-eyed
Who would with hunger, douse the fire
And let her not move mindlessly

Just like a monkey in the trees
Oh let her not fear every shape
Just like a wild deer in the glade
And let her not jump with surprise

Just like a nervous little child
And let her go with eyes downcast
As to a plough yoke holding fast
That she not fall into the power

Of monkey mind at every hour -
So let all pure and noble sisters
Following the Dispensation
Keep, as did the elder saints

Such perfect faculty restraint
And let them not use intimation
Forcefulness, or indication
When they ask for supplement -

“My livelihood might well be blamed
If thus I did consent to eat
The honey and the gruel obtained
By influence of verbal hints

And even if my bowels protrude
And trail outside, and even though
My life is to be jeopardised
I will not blot my livelihood [Mil]

For I will satisfy my heart
By shunning what I shouldn’t ask
And never will I undertake
The search that Buddhas all forsake” [2] -

A nun in faith, thus going forth
Should purify her livelihood
And, seeing clearly, give no thought
To any search that is not good

And as for that which sisters use
The requisites that they should choose
The goals to which they should aspire
Herein, below, shall be described -

“The sister who is truly wise
And nurtures virtue day and night
Makes careful use, when she reviews
Her clothing, dwelling, and her food

And resting place, and also water
For the washing of her robes
This nun unsullied, thus, will be
Like water on a lotus leaf

For all is aid, procured from others
Who are like her dearest mother
Thus, in portion and in score
There is no need for less or more [Sn] -

Thus, mindful then, without remitting
Eating, chewing, and in sitting
Tasting food, she thinks inside -
'It's nutriment to stay alive

For when I ate a dish of rice
Quite cold, my Preceptor advised -
'Young novice, if you're not restrained
You'll burn your tongue once more, I say' -

On hearing my Preceptor's words
Right then and there I felt the urge
And, sitting in a single session
Reached the goal of meditation

Since I am now waxed in mind
Just like a full moon in the sky
And all my obstacles have died
Thus, in the non-dual I abide'" [M] -

And so should any other nun
Who wishes all her pain to end
Make use of all her requisites
Discreetly, once reviewing them

For fools will sell their limbs for wealth
Or give them up to guard their health
But she who practises the Way
Gives wealth, and limbs, and life away

And not transgressing any precepts
Even when her life's at risk
She then attains Nirvana, thus
Through purity continuous

For neither mother, nor your father
Nor your relatives or kin
Can do as much as this for you
When virtue, thus, abides within

And so, with urgency, and wisely
Comprehending with insight, she -
Carried on the back of Dharma
Reaches, thus, supreme Nirvana -

“If a nun has little learning
And is careless of her virtue
She will find her ears burning
From the virtue she is spurning

If she is of little learning
Yet is careful of her virtue
For her virtue she is praised
As though among the learned raised

Yet if she is of ample learning
But is careless of her virtue
For her virtue she is blamed
As though her learning is erased

But if she is of ample learning
And is careful of her virtue
Then, upon her, praise will shower
Thus, of both she is endowed

The Buddha’s pupil of much learning
Keeps the Law with understanding
Jewel of Jambu River gold [3]
Of her, no one can blame or scold

Thus, deities will praise her, always
Brahmá, too, will give her praise” [A] -
Like those who live, since going forth
In mindfulness, ‘til their last days -

“I broke the bones of both my legs
To give the pledge you asked from me
And was revolted and ashamed
By death, accompanied by greed

Yet after I had gazed inside
And wisely then, applied insight
The sun arose and brightly shone -
I had become a Worthy One" [MA] -

Or like the ailing sister, who
Though writhing in her excrement
To give up virtue, she refused
And thus attained Enlightenment -

"I am a victim of disease
That racks me in its agony
As flowers by the sun burnt up
So this, my corpse, will wither up

Such filth, considered as delight
Unclean, while reckoned as if clean
Though full of ordure, seeming fair
To those who cannot see it clear

There's nothing in this rotting corpse
That we can love, and nothing's worse
Than doting on its shape and smell
For those who do, transfer to hell" [JA] -

"What joy for those of broken virtue [4]
Loving lust, with fruit of pain
More savage than the endless pain
Of clasping to a wall of flame?

What joy for those with mind impure
Who, failed in virtue, must endure
A pain that goes beyond all hope
Of being crushed by horse-hair ropes?

What joy for those, devoid of virtue
Taking praises from the faithful
Causing pain acuter than
The spearing of one's abdomen?

What joy is there in fine array
For those corrupt, whereby in hell
They will, for long, be forced to feel
The crush of blazing iron sheets?

What joy is there in tasty morsels?
Without virtue, they are poisons
Thus the wicked, throughout aeons
Have to swallow molten bronze

And when on gilded chairs they lounge
Instead of pleasure, pain is found
For endless torments wait in hell
On red-hot blazing iron shells

What joy for those of sinful ways
In their abodes obtained in faith
Since for that reason, they will dwell
In blazing iron dens in hell?

The Teacher of the World condemns
Such failed virtue in these terms -
‘These people are enslaved by senses
Weakened by corrupt defences’ -

Thus, the life of those abiding
Heedless, in delusion hiding
Only causes pain and hell
And only damages themselves

What is this careless life they lead
Since those with virtuous qualities
Will shun it like a pile of dung
Or corpses in the graveyard, flung?

Of fear, still, they are not free
Though free enough from bliss of peace
While heaven’s chance is sailing past
The road to hell is looming fast

The wicked, thus, we should envision
As the object of compassion”[A] -
In this way we emulate
The life of one immaculate

Whose virtue fills the world with hope
Her wearing of the holy robes
Enraptures, and inspires faith
Her going forth, will show the Way

This nun, who is the Buddha's kin
Of self-reproach, will have no fear
And thus it is her heart is clear
For there's no darkness in the sun

This sister in her virtue, bright
Thus, in the Wood will shine her light
Just as the lunar ornament
Illuminates the firmament -

Now, if the physical perfume
Of virtuous sisters can succeed
In pleasing even deities
What of the perfume of her virtue?

Far more perfect thus, than all
The other perfumes in the world
Because the perfume virtue sends
In all directions, freely wends -

The deeds done for a sister pure
Though they're few, will harvest fruit
And so the virtuous nun becomes
A vase of honour and renown

There are no cankers in this world
To plague the virtuous sister, thus
Who's working to remove the root
Of pain in all the world, throughout

Perfection of a human being
And also of a deity
If wished for, is not hard to gain
For her, whose virtue is attained

And once her virtue is attained
Her mind will have the single aim
To reach Nirvana right away -
The state where utter peace prevails

Such is the blessed fruit of virtue
Full and varied in its practise
Let all sisters know the Truth -
This root of all perfection's fruits

2 – The Ascetic Practices

While striving for their deathlessness
All clad in robes of homelessness
Bhikkhunis have the brightest gleam
More noble than the greatest queen

This robe the world's Great Teacher wore
Forsaking silken cloth, and more
For rags from off a rubbish heap -
Who would not have this robe to keep?

Remembering what she professed
When she went into homelessness
She wears her rags with great delight
As one dressed in the queen's robes might

No hoarding haunts the nun of wit
Who wants no more for requisite
She wears her robe where'er she goes
Contented joy is all she knows -

"So thus she wanders, undeterred
In just her robes, as flies the bird
With its own wings - let her rejoice
That frugalness has been her choice" [D] -

And she content with alms for food
Has independent livelihood
There is no greed within her mind
Her selfishness is left behind

She never need be indolent
Her livelihood is innocent -
So let a sister not disdain
Alms-gathering for her domain -

"For those who can survive on alms
And live without another's care
And pay no heed to gain and fame
The very gods will envy them" [Ud] -

The nun who goes from house to house
Will look upon them equally
Just like the new moon, shining down
Thus, free from house-dependency

For she who selfishness forgoes
And roams the world, with downcast eyes
Humility, she thereby knows
As door to door, she seeks her prize

From food, no illness does she feel
Who in one session takes her meal
For no indulging of her taste
Will let her mission go to waste

Her own true joy, a nun will find
In one meal session, pure in mind
For perfect virtue waits on this
And guides the way to perfect bliss

She settles doubts that might arise
Of extra food, with downcast eyes -
The true devotedness we see
In one uprooting gluttony

She shows contentment as a part
Of her own nature, glad at heart
None but an alms-food eater may
Consume her food in such a way

When later she refuses food
She doesn’t search in weary moods
Nor stores it for a later time
Nor feeds her gut above the line

And thus the nun from faults abstains
When she assumes this for her gain
The peace that Buddha praised abides
And deep contentment will arise -

For she who wants to live apart [5]
Remote abodes delight her heart
The Saviour of the World, as well
She gladdens, when in groves she dwells

The hermit who would dwell in woods
Accepts the bliss of solitude
Whose flavour is beyond the price
Of ecstasy in paradise

Thus, in the robes of rags, she goes
Into the forest, where she knows
The suit of virtue is her armour
Wrapped within the Holy Dharma

Thus equipped, she is assured
Of stopping Mára and his horde
So let the forest glades delight
In nurturing the nun's insight -

The Blessed One praised roots of trees
As one of the dependencies
For those who have no need of roof -
While practising in solitude

Secluded at the roots of trees
And guarded well by deities
She lives in true devotedness
Nor covets any dwelling place

And when the tender leaves are seen
Bright red at first, then turning green
And then to yellow as they flutter
Faith in permanence will shatter

Thus, enlightenment will be
Bequeathed to her, within this scene
For no wise nun disdains at all
The watching of the rise and fall -

And she who likes the open air
Will have no problem getting there
In such expanse there is a life
That aids the homeless sister's strife

Her laziness brought to a halt
Beneath the star-bejewelled vault
The sun and moon bathe her in light
In concentration, she delights

The joy seclusion's savour gives
She shall discover soon, who lives
In open air, and that is why
Some nuns prefer the open sky -

The sister who would watch the round
Of life and death, in charnel grounds
In diligence, she must be strict
For this is a momentous thing

For while awake and during sleep
In death her mind is ever steeped
With corpses lying in the dust
And soon she knows there is no lust

With this a sense of urgency
Arises, to stop vanity
This precious practice thus imparts
Nirvana's yearning in her heart -

One vowed to any bed, will be
Content with what she gets, and she
Can sleep in bliss without dismay
On nothing but a spread of hay

She is not eager for the best
No lowly couch does she detest -
She aids her young companions, too
Who to the nun's good life are new

So for a sister to delight
In any kind of bed is right
Towards Nirvana, thus she moves
As one the Noble Lord approves -

The sister who can place crosswise
Her feet to rest upon her thighs
And sit with back erect, shall make
Foul Mára's evil heart to quake

No more in supine joys to slump
Or drowning in lethargic dumps
For she who sits alert and long
Among the Buddhas will belong

The happiness and bliss it brings
Has naught to do with worldly things -
So must the sister's vow befit
The yearning for enlightenment

Part 2: Concentration *(Samādhi)*

3 – Taking a Meditation Subject

So what, therefore, is concentration?
It's comprised of many sorts
And therefore it has many aspects -
For the aim intended here

It's known as 'unity of mind'
Or as 'one-pointedness,' thus, in
The sense of harmony, therefore
Of consciousness and its attendants

Thus, in focussing upon
A single object, for some time -
And in what sense is it, thus, called?
It's concentration in the sense

Of concentrating on an object -
It's the centering, therefore
Of consciousness and its attendants
Evenly upon that object

'Placing,' therefore, is the meaning
Undistracted and unscattered
Rightly, on a single object -
As this, then, it should be known

Its aspect, thus, is non-distraction
So it has a function of
Eliminating all distraction
Manifested as abiding

As the Blessed One has said -
"A blissful mind is concentrated"
Thus, its nearest cause is bliss -
So how, then, should it be developed?

Having made a stand on virtue
Knowing how to seek the Truth
The one who wants development
Should sever the impediments -

A dwelling, family, and then gain
A class, or group, construction, too
Then travel, kin, affliction, books
And psychic powers, there are ten -

A ‘dwelling’ is a single room
Or hut, or monastery, and is
Thus, only an impediment
For those whose minds are caught up in

Construction, business, or the storage
Of belongings in that place -
For others there’s no obstacle
And ‘family’ are impediments

For those who live dependently
So close together, then, that they
Accompany them everwhere
Yet those who see their mother, or

Their father as another being
Just the same as any other
Will not have such obstacles -
And ‘gain’ is an impediment

For one who’s meritorious
And offered many requisites
For thereby she’s unable to
Seclude herself from people and

Engage in her ascetic duties -
Next, a ‘class’ is students who
Engage the sister in discussion
So she cannot get away

And undertake ascetic duties
Then ‘construction’ is the work
Involved in building new abodes
And always an impediment

And ‘travel’ is a journey, then
And it is an impediment
If then the sister’s always thinking
Of the journey, and its purpose -

‘Kin’ means teacher, friend, or student
Living in the monastery
Or in the house, it’s mother, father
Brother, sister, and so on

And they are an impediment
When they are sick, and need attention -
And ‘affliction,’ then, is illness
That’s a hindrance when afflicting

So it should be ministered
With medicine, or thinking thus -
“For I am not my body’s slave
And only came to suffering by

Maintaining it through countless rebirths
In the endless round of pain” -
And ‘books’ means duty to the scriptures
And it’s an impediment

For those consistently engaged
In research and in recitations -
Lastly, ‘psychic powers’ are
The supernormal powers of

A normal woman, hard to nurture
Like an infant, or young corn
And only an impediment
For those who wish to nurture insight

Psychic powers such as these
Can be obtained through concentration
So they should be severed, then
By one who seeks to nurture insight -

Subjects for one’s meditation
Are then of two kinds, for instance -
Those that have a general use
And those specific to the sister -

Ones that are of general use
Are loving-kindness to the Sangha
Deities, and kindred people
Humans, and all beings, too -

With loving-kindness to the Sangha
She produces kindliness
And with the deities, she is
Protected by the deities

And love towards her village, means
Her requisites are also safe -
With loving-kindness to all beings
She walks unhindered everywhere -

And mindfulness of death, is then
Of general use to sisters, too
For when she thinks “I have to die”
A nun gives up improper search

And with this sense of urgency
She learns to live without attachment -
Furthermore, of general use, then
Is perception of the foul

For even objects most divine
Will never tempt her mind to greed -
A special subject is the one
Selected for the temperament

Of that specific nun, and she
Must take it with her everywhere
Because it is the nearest cause
For higher stages on the Path -

The one who gives this twofold subject
Is, therefore, a noble friend
And she is one who thus possesses
Special qualities, like these -

She is revered, and cherished dear
Who, when she speaks, her words are clear
The speech she utters is profound
In purpose, and in reason sound -

When such a teacher has been found
Her subject she can then expound
Such that the nun may implement
According to her temperament -

By posture, action, and opinion
Eating, walking, and so on
And by the mental states inside
Thus, temperament is recognised

The step of greedy ones will spring
And that of haters, dragged along
Deluded ones are hesitant
And this extension should go on

For one of faithful temperament
Is parallel to greedy beings -
Faith is strong in those with greed
When fruitful karma then appears

Greed can also be warmhearted
In a non-constructive way
While faith is so, constructively -
Desire's the object, thus, of greed

While faith seeks virtue and the rest
For greed won't give up what is harmful
Faith will only grasp what's best -
Then those who are intelligent

Are parallel to hateful beings -
Understanding can be strong
In those who hate, with fruitful karma -
Hate is disaffected, and thus

In a non-constructive way
Does not hold to its object, and
So likewise, but constructively
Is understanding, thus, as well -

And hate seeks only unreal faults
While understanding seeks the real
And hate occurs, then, in the mode
Of deprecating living beings

While understanding has the mode
Of deprecating all formations -
Those who like to speculate
Are agnate with deluded ones -

Obstructive thoughts that are applied
Will very often thus arise
In beings with deluded minds -
Thus, such a temperament will strive

To foster unarisen states
Because their special qualities
Are very much the same, therefore
As those belonging to delusion

Both engage in restlessness -
Delusion from perplexity
And thoughts from strewn mentality
And as delusion vacillates

Because of volatility
So too, applied mentation, when
Engaged in glib conjecturing
Will also, thereby, fluctuate -

So from this, then, the temperaments
Can thus be seen in body movements -
Those of greedy ones will be
Performed with grace, and skilfully

Exuding, also, confidence
While those who hate will thereby act
With stiffness, and excitedly
And those who are deluded will

Perform their actions, thus, as if
Confused, and indecisively -
And so it goes with eating, seeing
States occurring,[6] and the rest -

Yet this advice for temperaments
Has not been handed down complete -
They all depend upon the friend
And have no authenticity

For even those of hating mode
Can thus exhibit the behaviour
Thus ascribed to greedy ones
When they pursue it zealously -

“Through questions, then, or penetration
Teachers know the temperament
And therefrom give an explanation
Of the meditation subject” -

So once analysis is done
Through eating, seeing, and so on
And meditative course invited
One's abode should be decided -

Large abode, or new abode
One tumbling down, or near a road
Or one with flowers, pond, or leaves
Or fruits, the ones that people seek

In cities, among logs or fields
Where people quarrel, in a port
In borderlands, or frontiers
With gaming, and corrupted friends

In all these places lie distraction -
Noise, or people, or construction -
Sisters need to recognise
That these are all the danger signs -

A resting place that has five factors
Is the one that's known as favoured
As the Blessed One has stated -
"What are these five factors, sisters?

First, a place that's not too far
And not too near, and has a path
For ease of coming and of going -
One not frequented by day

With little sound, or speech at night -
And little contact with the flies
And biting insects or the wind
The burning sun, and creeping things -

Where nuns who live there can obtain
Their robes and alms food and their beds
And medicines as requisite
For treatment, then, when they are sick -

And lastly, thereby, in that lodging
There are elder sisters living
Who are learned, versed in scripture
Holders of the Dharma, and

Vinaya and the twofold Codes [7]
So when the sisters ask them questions
'How is this?' and 'what's the meaning?'
Then the elders can reveal

The unrevealed and unexplained
Removing doubts about the things
That cause vexation in the nuns -
So these are the five factors, sisters" [A] -

One who lives in such a place
Should sever minor hindrances -
So hair and nails should all be trimmed
And tattered robes should be repaired

And likewise then, her bed and chair
And alms-bowl, too, should be repaired -
A nun who, thus, herself maintains
Will show her aptness for the Way -

Before a sister then embarks
Upon her course of contemplation
To the Blessed One, she should
Prostrate herself in dedication -

"Greatest Sage, I now relinquish
This, my person, unto you" -
For in this refuge, she will be
As fixed and stable as a tree

Then, with this as her base, she nurtures
Sixfold modes [8] of inclination
So she knows the fault in greed
And that of hate, and of delusion -

In her deep renunciation
She will see the fault, thus, in
The worldly and domestic life
And in her preference for seclusion

She will know undoubtedly
The dangers of society
And then in her relinquishment
She sees the fault in all the kinds

Of reappearance and becoming -
Thus it is that Blessed Ones
Of past, and present, and the future
Gained release with these six modes -

So when engaged in contemplation
Start with access concentration
Moving on with strong impulsion
To absorption meditation

If you do this in one session
Night and day, in contemplation
All is well, but those who can't
Should hold it, like a babe in arms

And guard it well, nor count the cost
And what is gained will not be lost -
Who fails to have her guard maintained
Will lose each time what she has gained -

Abode, resort, and speech, and people
Posture, climate, and the eating -
Shun these seven different kinds
If meditation's undermined

But cultivate the proper kind
For one perchance, so doing, finds
She need not wait too long until
Absorption shall her wish fulfil

And so, with proper cultivation
And employing wise attention
One's absorption will be gained
And thus the greater goal attained

For even though the efforts burn
And no result comes in return
Yet still a sister should persist
And never in this task desist

For if a nun capitulates
Thus, thinking not to meditate
Her task will never gain distinction
Even though with small fruition

She in temperament, who's wise
Will notice how her mind inclines
And always will her energy
Be coupled with serenity

And if her mind is holding back
She prods it gently, gives it slack
But when it pushes to outpace
She pulls the rein, and guides the race

As when the flowers are in bloom
Excited bees will overshoot
Yet clever bees with balanced speed
Enjoy the honey-dew with ease

Or when a skipper hoists her sails
Incautiously, in savage gales
While clever skippers pull them in
And thus the race, they always win

Therefore, restrained and well-controlled
Well-balanced efforts never fold -
The nun who, thus, controls her mind
Will gain, not otherwise, the prize -

So let her set aside the states
Of laxity and restlessness
And settle now her mind to rest
As thus the bees and sails suggest

And then, according to instructions
She should filter all obstructions -
Lust, resentment, sloth, and doubt
And agitation driven out

Then let her have a joyful heart
Like queens inside the cleanest park
Or bees who come and go inside
A hive completely purified -

And thus with insight, she will see
The world as one, and this will be
The cause of equanimity -
The highest wisdom's master key

4 – Foulness as a Meditation Subject

Now, with absorption holding sway
To progress further, night and day
More points to study will repay
Each with its special part to play

The Master with Ten Hundred Eyes
Of filth awareness, eulogised -
“For those who want the greatest test
To contemplate a corpse is best -

The bloated, livid, festering
The cut-up, gnawed, and strewed about
The hacked and scattered, maggot-ridden
Bloodied, and the skeleton

For she who apprehends this foulness
Her abiding will be blissful
And, thus, worthy of great merit
In her mind’s development” [A] -

A nun who has, thereby, gained insight
Is without cupidity
For so it is the bloated-up will
Make the defects evident

Within the body’s shape and form
And thus it is the livid will
Make evident disfigurement
Of any colour in the skin

And so it is that festering
Makes evident disfigurement, then
Of the body’s scent and smell
And so it is the cut-up will

Make evident disfigurement
Of compactness within the body
So it is the gnawed will then
Make evident disfigurement

Of fineness in the skin and flesh
And thus it is the strewed about
Makes evident disfigurement
Of wholeness, therein, of the limbs

And so it is the hacked and scattered
Illustrates disfigurement
Of wholeness, therein, of the body
And the maggot-ridden corpse, then

Illustrates the otherness
Of ownership, thus, of the body
And the bloodied corpse will then
Make evident disfigurement

Of elegance within the body -
Finally, the skeleton
Makes evident repulsiveness
Of all the bones within the body -

As regards this tenfold foulness
It arouses joy in her
Who sees advantages, thereby -
“For in this way I shall, thus, find

Release from ageing and demise” -
Just as a scavenger who spies
A garbage heap will thus surmise
That now her wages will be high -

And though this foulness is ten kinds
Its only aspect is its state -
Impure, stinking, and repulsive
And this aspect thus appears

Not only in the dead, but also
In a living body, too
For this is, thus, the body’s nature -
Made up of three hundred bones

One hundred eighty joints, as well
Nine hundred sinews holding tight
And plastered over by nine hundred
Pieces of well-padded flesh

Enveloped in moist inner skin
Held by the outer cuticle
With orifices here and there
All oozing like a pot of grease

Inhabited by bugs and worms
The home of sickness and disease
And always oozing excrement
And urine, snot, and phlegm, and sweat

And when it is untended by
Anointing, bathing, or with clothing
Even then a queen would be
No different from a scavenger

And so there's no distinction, then
Between the body of a queen
And that of an untouchable
In foul corruption's reckoning -

By rubbing stains out on its teeth
Concealing it with many cloths
And daubing it with scents and salves
It gets worked up into a state

That thus permits of 'I' and 'mine' -
So men delight in women, and
Then women take delight in men
Without perceiving the true nature

Of this foulness, which is masked by
Adventitious ornaments
But ultimately there is nothing
Here that should be lusted after -

When such bits of it drop off
As spittle, snot, and hair, and nails
They are not touched, and people feel
Ashamed, embarrassed, and dismayed

And yet while they remain inside
Though still repulsive, they are viewed
As permanent, agreeable
Desireable, and pleasant, too

These beings wrapped in ignorance
Affection, and desire for self
Are therefore like the jackal, who
Desired a bloom that looked like meat -

“There was a jackal chanced to see
A meat-like flower in a tree
She went to where it stood in haste -
‘Meat from this tree I want to taste!’

But though she chewed the blooms that fell
She could find nothing fit to eat -
‘Unlike the meat there on the tree
What’s on the ground here is no good’” -

A wise nun doesn't treat as filthy
Therefore, just the part that fell
But treats as foul, the part as well
That in the body has its seat

The foolish simply cannot tell
How to escape this painful spell
They take the body to be fair
And soon get caught in Evil’s snare

But since the wise have thus laid bare
This filthy body’s nature, so
No matter live or dead, they know
There is no beauty lurking there -

“This filthy body stinks outright
Just like manure, a privy’s site -
This body, nuns that have insight
Condemn, as of a fool’s delight

A tumour, where nine holes abide
Wrapped in a clammy coat of hide
And trickling filth on every side
Pollutes with stenches, far and wide

If it, perchance, should come about
That what’s inside, should then come out
Then, surely we would need a knout
To put the crows and dogs to rout” -

Thus, when a nun is truly wise
And keeps this foulness in her mind
Her constant task will surely be
Thus blessed with mighty potency

5 – Six Recollections

Now, after insight into filth
The ‘recollections’ that come next
As fit for meditation, then
Are grouped into a list of ten -

For mindfulness is recollection
Rising, thus, repeatedly
In those who venture forth in faith
Conforming, therefore, to the Way -

The first is mindfulness of Buddha
And the next is of the Dharma
Followed by the Sangha, and
Then virtue, giving, and the devas

Next is mindfulness of death
And then the mindfulness of body
And then that is followed by
The mindfulness of breathing, and

Then lastly, with its object of
Cessation of all suffering
Is recollection of Nirvana -
Firstly, one should recollect

The virtues of the Blessed One
His ignorance and anger gone
The ultimate development
Of heavenly accomplishment -

He stands remote and far from cankers
Having purged them on the path
And so he is accomplished, then
Because he is remote and far -

“A man remote indeed, we call
From something he has not at all
The Saviour too, who has no stain
Has, thus, the name ‘Accomplished’ gained” [M] -

The enemies that were deployed
Greed and the rest, have been destroyed
The Buddha, with his wisdom’s sword
Is thus accomplished, all accord

The spokes of rebirth's wheel have been
Destroyed with wisdom's weapon, keen
By him, the Helper of the World
And so 'Accomplished,' he is called -

This Saviour, who was given homage
Paid by kings and deities
For his achievements in the world
Is therefore worthy of that word

No secret evil deed may claim
In someone so Supreme, the name
'Accomplished' so deservedly
By absence of such secrecy

This Sage of Calmness, unalloyed
Has vanquished all the foes deployed
He is devoid, for evermore
Of all contaminants, therefore

Becoming's Wheel is penetrated
And the self, obliterated
For these reasons he may claim
The word 'Accomplished' for his name -

"What must be known's directly known
What must develop has been grown
What must be lost has been abandoned -
That is why I am Enlightened" [Sn] -

Suffering is what must be known
And craving, therefore, must be lost
Cessation must be realised
The path, then, is what must be grown -

The eye is thus the truth of suffering
Craving is its origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path

The ear is then the truth of suffering
Craving is its origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path

The nose is thus the truth of suffering
Craving is its origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path

The tongue is then the truth of suffering
Craving is its origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path

The body is the truth of suffering
Craving is its origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path

The mind is thus the truth of suffering
Craving is its origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path

The sense-fields are the truth of suffering
Craving is their origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path

Perception, then, is suffering
And craving is its origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path

Volition, too, is suffering
And craving is its origin
Their non-occurrence is cessation
Understanding is the path -

And so too in the cases of
The aggregates, the recollections
Contemplation of the foul
Divine abidings, and so on [9] -

Formations, then, are therefore suffering [10]
Ignorance, their origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

And consciousness is suffering, with
Formations as its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

And name-and-form is suffering, too
With consciousness its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

The sixfold base is suffering
With name-and-form its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

And contact then, is, suffering
The sixfold base its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

And feeling, then, is suffering
With contact as its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

And craving, then, is suffering
With feeling as its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

And clinging, then, is suffering
With craving as its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

Becoming, then, is suffering
With clinging as its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

And birth is also suffering, with
Becoming as its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path

And ageing-death is suffering, too
With birth, then, as its origin
Escape from both is thus cessation
Understanding is the path -

Thus, in this way he has revealed
Progressively, and totally
All dharmas rightly, by himself
And that is why he is Enlightened

He has seen, through penetration
Essence, rising, and cessation
Of the world in all its ways
Yet if it's known, he does not say -

"It is impossible to wend
By travel to Samsara's end
And yet there's no escape from pain
Until the end of world is gained

Thus, it's a Knower of the Worlds
Who will arrive at end of world
And one whose life divine unfurls
Until it's lived out to its term

He is at peace, who knows the end
Without escaping from the pain
Who has no hope of his success
In neither this world, nor the next" [S] -

"As far as sun and moon rotate
Illuminating night and day
More than a thousand times as great
His power holds unfailing sway" [M] -

He knows the temperaments of all
He knows their tendencies inherent
Knows their bents and faculties
Their infinite mentalities

He knows the worlds, and all locations
Where all beings do rotation
Knows the measures and extents
And all the features thus existent

Like Mount Meru, great and lofty
Plunging down into the sea
Full four and eighty thousand leagues
And towering up, in like degree

And then the seven mountain rings
Around Mount Meru, in such wise
That each of them, in depth and height
Is half its predecessor's size -

Yugandhara, Ìsadhara
Karavìka, Sudassana
Nemindhara, Vinataka
Then there is the Assakanna

Cliffs agleam, with gems inside
Where kings and gods and sprites reside
The Himalaya too, the best
With four and eighty thousand crests

The Jambu Tree, magnificent
A hundred leagues circumference
From Jambudīpa's name decreed
All these and many more, he sees

For Buddha's insight, so exquisite
Knows locations infinite
The sun and moon, and all the hells
He knows each atom in all realms

He teaches gods and humans, too
And guides all beings to be tamed
From animals to deities
He teaches of the moment now

The life to come, the ultimate
According to the circumstance
And leads all wayward beings, thus
Across becoming's wilderness

Just like the god who heard him teach
Who, when she died, woke from a sleep
Within the realm of Thirty-Three
And, thus, to her did Buddha speak -

“Who now bows down as to confess
And shines with glory of success
Illuminating all around
With beauty rich and so profound? -

‘My last life as a frog, was I
When by my home, abrupt was I
By cowherd killed, I had no choice
While listening to your sublime voice

Yet now awake in paradise
Your blessed words have thus sufficed
To grant me freedom in this realm
May beings all in bliss now dwell’” [vv] -

The Buddha’s name is ‘Blessed,’ as well
And thus bestowed upon him as
The highest of all beings, and
Distinguished by his qualities

For ‘Blessed’ is then the best of words
And ‘Blessed’ is thus the finest word
Deserving awe and veneration
‘Blessed’ is his name, therefore

He has abolished greed and hate
And of delusion he is free
He knows not any evil states
So ‘Blessed’ is how his name should be

And he is also ‘Blessed’ because
He analysed the noble truth
Of suffering into senses of
Oppressing, burning, and inconstance

And the truth of origin
As thus accumulating and
Impediment and source and bond
And then cessation, also, into

Great escape, seclusion, and
The formless and the deathless, and
The path he analysed as outlet
Vision, and predominance -

So when a sister thus recalls
The Buddha's qualities this way
Her mind is not obsessed by greed
Aversion, or delusion, and

Her mind is right on that occasion
Happiness will thus arise
Disturbances are tranquillised
And she is focussed on the prize -

With reverence for the Master, then
Her faith and mindfulness will grow
She conquers fear and dread, as well
The Master's presence, she will know

For when a nun is truly wise
And keeps the Buddha in her mind
Her constant task will surely be
Thus, blessed with mighty potency -

Yet greater than the Blessed One
And brighter than the noon-day sun
Is recollection of the Dharma
'Well-proclaimed' in word and honour

'Well-proclaimed,' then, at the start
And in the middle and the end
And 'well-proclaimed' as perfect meaning
Words, and syllables, and sound

A single stanza of the Law
Is good with the initial word
And good, then, with the middle word
And perfect with the final word

The Dispensation, too, is good
With virtue, therefore, at the start
And in the middle it is good
With concentration and the path

And it is good, then, in the end
With its fruition, and Nirvana -
At the start, then, it is good
As it suppresses obstacles

And when it is a practice, and
Brings bliss and insight, it is good
And at the end, it's also good
By bringing perfect equipoise -

So, 'well-proclaimed' in the beginning
And the middle, and the end
And 'well-proclaimed' it is, because
It promulgates a pure life

That's perfect in its purity
In meaning and in detail, for
In meaning, then, it thus conforms
By clarifying and revealing

Stating, and explaining it -
In detail, then, it has perfection
Of descriptions and inflection
Content, style, and language, too -

In meaning, also, it's profound
In subject and in penetration
And in law, and in its teaching
It's profound in detail, so

It's flawless, then, in its perfection
As there's nothing to be added
Stainless in its purity
For nothing, thus, can be subtracted -

Furthermore, the Dharma is
'Apparent in the here and now'
Because it therefore can be seen
By those who have eliminated

Greed, aversion, and so on -
"For when a nun is dyed with greed
And overwhelmed, and plagued by greed
She thinks, then, of her own afflictions

Those of others, and of both
And suffers mental pain and grief
When greed has been abandoned, though
She thinks not of her own afflictions

Nor of others, nor of both
And does not suffer pain or grief -
So this is how the Dharma is
Apparent in the here and now"[A] -

'Apparent' also, thus, because
It conquers with its 'proper view'
Destroys defilements with that view
Leads to Nirvana with that view

And furthermore, it's worthy of
An 'invitation to inspect'
Because it is discoverable
And due to its untaintedness -

For if a woman says that there is
Money in her empty fist
She can't invite you, then, to "see it"
As it thereby can't be found

Conversely, then, while dung or urine
Very likely can be found
We do not say, then, "come and see it"
If we want to cheer the mind

But Dharma is discoverable
As such, in its own essence, and
Unblemished as the full moon shining
Brightly in a cloudless sky

Or as a bead of pure water
Perched upon a pristine cloth
So therefore it is worthy of
An 'invitation to inspect' -

And furthermore, the Dharma is
Worthwhile inducing *in* one's mind
For it 'leads onwards to Nirvana'
Even if one's head's on fire

And worth inducing *by* one's mind
So it becomes a shelter, then
Upon the path towards Nirvana -
What induces noble ones

Towards Nirvana is the path
Which is inductive, thereby, from
Their very own experience -
So Dharma, thus, should be induced

To realisability
Consisting in fruition, and
The highest state that is Nirvana -
Also, Dharma is ‘directly

Thus experienceable
By all the kinds of noble sages’
Each within herself, and so
“The path has been developed, and

The fruit attained, cessation known
Within that continuity” -
For thus it does not happen, then
That when a nun perfects the path

Her colleague casts aside defilements
Neither does she dwell in comfort
When the nun attains fruition
And the friend can’t realise

The same Nirvana as her, either
So it is not visible
The way that jewellery is perceived
And only seen within one’s mind

So Dharma is, then, well-proclaimed
Apparent in the here and now
Because it has a proper view
Invites inspection, and leads on -

Now, when a sister thus recalls
The Dharma’s qualities this way
Her mind is not obsessed by greed
Aversion, or delusion, and

Her mind is right on that occasion
Happiness will thus arise
With reverence for the Dharma, and
Her faith and mindfulness will grow

She conquers fear and dread, as well
The Dharma's presence, she will know
And like a shrine room, she will be
Of veneration, praiseworthy

For when a nun is truly wise
And keeps the Dharma in her mind
Her constant task will surely be
Thus, blessed with mighty potency -

The Sangha too, in salutation
Thus, deserve your veneration
For abiding on the Way -
Good, straight, and right, that is to say

For they have entered on the Way
That's irreversible and in
Conformity, thus, with the Truth
The Way that cannot be disproved -

Attentive to the Buddha's words
And forming a Community
Possessed of virtue, and right view
Upon the Noble Path that's true

The Sangha's path is therefore straight
Avoiding, thus, the two extremes
And taking, then, the middle way
That shuns the faults of mind and body

And this path is true, because
Until Nirvana it persists
So therefore this Community
Is worthy of the greatest gifts

For even those who keep a fire
A hundred years in sacrifice
Believing it to bring great fruit
Would have no worth, in contrast to

One moment's homage, that is paid
To those of self-development
For gifts to Sangha, that are made
Of merits, are most excellent

A merit field, so unsurpassed
A thousand royal fields of rice
Could never match the Sangha's worth -
It has no equal in the world

And so the Sangha is the place
For growth of merit in the world -
The buds of joy and happiness
Will bloom when Sangha is the base -

Now, when a sister thus recalls
The Sangha's qualities this way
Her mind is not obsessed by greed
Aversion, or delusion, and

Her mind is right on that occasion
Happiness will thus arise
With reverence for the Sangha, and
Her faith and mindfulness will grow

She conquers fear and dread, as well
The Sangha's presence, she will know
And so her mind will tend towards
Attainment of its qualities

So when a nun is truly wise
And keeps the Sangha in her mind
Her constant task will surely be
Thus, blessed with mighty potency -

And next, a nun who recollects
The qualities of virtue should
Perceive her virtues as "untorn
Unrent, unmottled, liberating

Celebrated by the wise
Without adherence, and thereby
Conducive, thus, to concentration" -
When no one of them is broken

At the start, or in the end
Just like a cloth with ragged ends
Then they are, therefore, called 'untorn'
When none are broken in the middle

Like a ripped or punctured cloth
Then they are thereby called ‘unrent’
And when untouched at intervals
Not strewed about, or mottled like

A speckled cow with varied spots
Then they are, therefore, called ‘unmottled’ -
These same virtues ‘liberate’
Because they free her from the bonds

Of craving, grasping, and so on
And also, then, because they are
Praised by the wise Enlightened Ones
And so they are ‘without adherence’

Since they’re not adhered to, then
With craving, grasping, or false views
And so it cannot thus be said
“There is a defect in your virtues”

And they ‘lead to concentration’
Helping, thus, the mind to focus
Gaining access and absorption [11]
Then the path, and then fruition -

When a sister thus recalls
Her virtue’s qualities this way
Her mind is not obsessed by greed
Aversion, or delusion, and

Her mind is right on that occasion
Faithful to this recollection
There is growth in admiration
And in reverence for the training

Living in communion, with
Her fellow sisters, thus embarked
Upon the path of purity
She’s sedulous in welcoming

Devoid of fear of self-reproach
Sees fear in the slightest fault
And thus a faith begins to grow
That leads to happy destinies

For when a nun is truly wise
And keeps the virtues in her mind
Her constant task will surely be
Thus, blessed with mighty potency -

“It is the greatest gain for me
That I abide with my heart free
From holding on to anything
Delighting in relinquishing” [A] -

Such is the pledge of sages, wise
Free from the stains of avarice
Who practise generosity
And nurture special qualities

By giving food, then we give life
And in the next, will be divine
For one who gives, is ever loved
And knows she has more than enough

Thus, always wanting to be asked
In giving, she is unsurpassed
No greed or hate pollutes her mind
For she is fearless and kind -

Thus, when a sister recollects
This selfless generosity
Her mind is not obsessed by greed
Aversion, or delusion, and

Her mind is right on that occasion
Faithful to this recollection
She increases her intention
To engage in acts of giving

With a preference for non-greed
Conforming, thus, with loving-kindness
Filling her with joy and bliss, and
Bound for happy destinies

So when a nun is truly free
To practise generosity
Her constant task will surely be
Thus, blessed with mighty potency -

Enhancing special qualities
A nun should think of deities
Possessed of faith, and thus reborn
In higher realms, in greater form -

“Such deities were steeped in faith
That once they died within those realms
They were reborn in the same place
And I, too, am possessed of faith

They were possessed of virtue, too
And learning, generosity
And understanding, such that when
They died, therefore, within those realms

They were reborn in the same place -
Such wisdom, generosity
And knowledge, therein, is existent
Thus, within my being too” [A] -

And so it is these qualities
And purity, without the greed
In both the nun and deities
Ensures the path to ecstasy -

Thus, when a sister recollects
The virtues of the deities
Her mind is not obsessed by greed
Aversion, or delusion, and

Her mind is right on that occasion
Faithful to this recollection
She’s more loved by deities
And from this, then, she thus obtains

An even greater wealth of faith
Conforming, thus, with understanding
Filling her with joy and bliss, and
Bound for happy destinies -

“For when her mind has rectitude
The Dharma’s meaning spurs her on
The law itself inspires her
This application makes her glad

And happiness is born within”[A] -
These recollections thus succeed
In noble ones, and no one else
For thus the special qualities

Of Buddha, Dharma and the Sangha
In their manifold array
Are only evident to them
And only they possess the virtue

That’s untorn, unrent, and so on
And the generosity
Unblemished by the stain of greed
And only they possess a faith

That’s like the faith of deities -
“For it is wonderful, o sisters
How the Blessed One discovered
Cognisance of boundlessness

Within the crowded house of rebirth -
For the cleansing of all beings
For the end of pain and grief
And for surmounting lamentation

For attainment of the Way
And for fulfilment of Nirvana -
And so this is all achieved, then
Through the six remembrances

By noble nuns, susceptible
To purifying in this way”[A] -
And thus, the Buddha knows and sees
And is accomplished and enlightened -

One with faith and energy
With mindfulness, and concentration
And with understanding, too
Should thus remember these six things

For when a nun can focus on
The sixfold recollections, thus
Her constant task will surely be
Thus, blessed with mighty potency

6 – Other Recollections

To keep a sense of urgency
A nun should think of her demise
By timely death through dissipation
Of one's merit, or one's life

Or otherwise untimely death
Through karma, then, that interrupts
The other life-producing karma -
Herein, death through dissipation

Of one's merit is, thereby
The kind of death that comes about
When former rebirth-bearing karma
Ends in ripening, even though

Conditions that prolong one's life
May still be present at the time
And death that comes through dissipation
Of one's life is that which is

The kind of death that comes about
Upon the dissipation, thereby
Of the normal span of life
Among all those alive today

Which measures just a century
And death that is untimely is
The life, thus, interrupted by
A karma that is capable

Of kicking off a sudden fall
Or caused by former karma in
The case of weapons, and so on -
A nun who would such death discern

Should go into retreat at once
And focus her attention, thus -
"For death will happen, life will be
Thus, interrupted - death will come" -

But if her focus is unwise
In thinking of the death, say, of
Someone she likes, then sorrow comes
As in a mother thinking of

The death of her beloved child -
And gladness then arises in
The careless recollection of
A person whom she may despise

As when we think of foes - and then
A lack of urgency arises
On the recollection of
The death of neutral people, like

A doctor looking at a corpse -
And lastly then, anxiety
Arises on reflection, then
Of one's own death as whereby, then

We see a killer with a dagger -
Here, there is no mindfulness
Or urgency or knowledge, therefore
One should think of beings who

Have thus been murdered, or have died
Although they lived an honest life
Envisaging with mindfulness
And urgency and knowledge, for

Our death is coming all the time
And can arrive without a sign -
Just like a stone that falls to earth
Our death will always come from birth -

"For, on the very day that we
Have been conceived inside a womb
We have no choice, but going on
Nor going, can we once return [JA]

The days and nights go slipping by
As life keeps dwindling steadily
Till mortals' span, like water pools
Is empty of its contents, too [S]

As there is fear, when fruits are ripe
That in the morning they will drop
So mortals are in constant fear
That after birth, their death is near

And as the fate of pots of clay
Once by the potter's hands are made
Condemns them to disintegrate
For mortals, only death awaits [Sn]

Just as the dewdrops on the lawn
Will vanish at the touch of dawn
Or like a sudden lightning strike -
We see the span of human life" [JA] -

So thus, the nun, with urgency
Should exercise her mind to see
The truth, then, that success and wealth
Are also brought to heel by death -

"He gave, with joy, a million worth
Once he had conquered all the earth
Till in the end his realm came down
To less than half a gall-nut's worth

Yet when he'd used up all the good
His body breathing its last breath
The Sorrowless Asoka,[12] too
Felt sorrow, face-to-face with death [Ap]

Thus, age and death roll over all
Like rocky mountains towering high
So vast they reach up to the sky
Advancing, thus, from every side

That all the lives beneath them grind -
The merchants, priests, and warriors
The outcastes, and the scavengers
All fall to dying's ravages" [S] -

If kings and queens of Royal hue
Whose fame does spread so mightily
All fall into death's power, too
What can be said of those like me?

And even those of mighty strength
The wrestlers and the fighting men
Although throughout the world renowned
Will give in to the Reaper's power -

Though so great was Śāriputra's
Understanding faculty
He fell into death's power, too -
What can be said of those like me?

To help them in their search for truth
The Sages many signs employed
Their knowledge brought them solitude
And their afflictions they destroyed

Yet though they lived in constancy
What can be said of those like me?
For, they too, knew the pain of age
And death they could no way evade

And even Buddha, Greatest Sage
Who held such might in every way
Of unsurpassed colossal fame
He, too, succumbed to Death's array -

There's no one, even one without
Great guilt, or great timidity
But will be smitten down, so how
Will Death not conquer one like me?"

From many roots, death comes about
From worms within, to snakes without
A sister who is on the Way
Will ponder this, both night and day

This life is impotent and frail
And on each breath it must avail
When breath does not go out or in
Then death has found us once again

The span, the sickness, and the time
And where the body, thus, will die
The living world can never know -
These things cannot be, thus, foretold

For human life is transient
So Sages hold it in contempt
And knowing death will soon arrive
They act as one whose head's on fire -

“Oh let me live just one day long
That I may hear the Buddha’s song” -
Such is the lazy mindfulness
Of those who dwell in negligence

“Oh let me live just one breath long
That I may hear the Buddha’s song” -
Such is the deepest mindfulness
Of those who dwell in diligence -

Our person, pleasure, pain, and life
One conscious moment, flicking by
Ceased aggregates, dead or alive
Cannot return, they’re all alike

With consciousness, the world is born
In thoughts, formation, feeling, form
When they dissolve, the world is dead
In this lies our Enlightenment

A sister thus devoted to
The mindfulness of death invites
A disenchantment with becoming -
Conquering her lust for life

Condemning notions of the self
Avoiding storage in excess
Forgoing stains of avarice
Perception of impermanence

Will clarify within her mind
Soon after followed, thereupon
By views of suffering, and not-self -
While those without these thoughts of death

Succumb to horror and confusion
At the time of their demise
In great delusion, then, as though
They’re seized by beasts or murderers

The sister dies without delusion
In a state devoid of fear
And thus attains the deathless, now
Or goes to happy destinies -

So when a nun is truly wise
And always ponders her demise
Her constant task will surely be
Thus, blessed with mighty potency -

And now this exposition, then
To further the development
Of concentration, will discuss
The boon of body-mindfulness

For as a meditation subject
Mindfulness of body is
Thus, only ever promulgated
After Buddhas have arisen -

“Sisters, when one thing is practiced
And developed frequently
It gains the greatest urgency
And, thus, the greatest benefit

The most supreme surcease of bondage
And the greatest mindfulness
Awareness, and the acquisition
Of true knowledge, and of vision

And a happy life, right now
And knowledge of deliverance -
And what, then, is that single thing?
It is, thus, body mindfulness

For deathlessness of body
Is the savouring of mindfulness
It leads to urgency supreme
And benefits for every being” [A] -

What is, thus, intended here
As mindfulness of body, is
Direction of attention to
Observance of repulsiveness

To do this, one should view their body
From the top, and then on down
Observing all within their skin
The many kinds of filth therein

The hair, the teeth, the sinews, bones
The kidney, liver, spleen and lungs
The dung, the phlegm, the blood, and fat
The urine, spittle, grease, and snot -

This carcass is a pile of filth
And maladies that damage health
When from the skin, we go on down
There is no beauty to be found

Reciting, as one looks within -
“This is the fat, this is the skin
This is the kidney, and the marrow
Like a corpse upon the gallows” -

Those who do this contemplation
Many times in meditation
See the parts becoming clear -
The mind stops running here and there

When hair is in a bowl, we say
That “this is foul, take it away”
And just as plants from waste, will sprout
So hair from our own filth comes out

And as for hair, the same for nails
Which are the shape of fishy scales -
We love them til they’re dropping off
And then we treat them like they’re snot

Our tooth bones are of many shapes
That look like seeds in lumps of clay
Or jasmine buds, or wagon props -
While those who have them like to pout

When thus they rot, they want them out
And as for skin, it wraps around
The total body, and outside
It’s brown or black or yellow, but

The skin itself inside is white
And evidence of this is made
When thus the outer cuticle
Has contact with a fire’s flame

Or bears the impact of a blow
The skin, too, is of many shapes -
Upon the toes it's like cocoons
And on the backs of feet it's like

The shape of shoes with uppers in
Upon the calf, its shape is like
A palm leaf wrapping rice that's cooked
And on the thighs, its shape is like

A long sack full of unthreshed rice
Upon the buttocks, then, its shape
Is of a water-laden strainer
And the skin upon the back

Is shaped like hide stretched on a plank
And on the belly, then, its shaped
Like hide stretched right across a lute
Upon the chest, its shape is like

Two mounds of paddy, side by side
And on the arms, the skin is shaped
Like hide that's wrapped around a quiver -
That upon the backs of hands

Is shaped just like a razor box
And on the fingers, then, it's shaped
Just like a box for stamps or keys
Upon the neck the skin is shaped

Just like a collar for the throat
And on the face, the shape is like
An insects' nest that's full of holes
And lastly on the head it's shaped

Just like a bag for alms-food bowls -
The sister, thus, should first discern
The inner skin upon the face
Beginning with the upper lip

And moving to the frontal bone
And next, she should define the head
Thus separating, as it were
The skin's connection with the bone

As if her hand were in between
The bag that is the inner skin
And thus the bowl that's in the bag
And then she should keep moving on

Through shoulders, arms, the groin, and legs
And then work back up to the neck
And after she defines the jaw
She ceases at the lower lip -

Of flesh, there are nine hundred pieces
Red in colour, like raw steak
Or flowers of the kiṃsuka
And also it has many shapes -

Within the calves, it is the shape
Of cooked rice in a palm-leaf bag
And on the thighs, its shape is like
An ellipsoidal rolling pin

Upon the buttocks, then, its shape
Is like the facing of an oven
And the flesh within the back
Is like a slab of palm-tree sugar

Then the flesh between the ribs
Is shaped like clay that has been squeezed
And that within the breast is shaped
Like lumps of clay rolled into balls

And then flung down upon the ground
And in the upper arms it's shaped
Like large, skinned rats, and twice the size
All plastered on three hundred bones

And bound by sinews like a net
In shapes that we cannot forget
Like creepers, strings, and threads, and cords
And yam shoots, mesh, and raven's claws

The feet bones look like fruit and seeds
The shin a stick, and froth, the knee
The spine bones are a stack of pipes
And rib bones sabres, spreading wide

The neck bones are like bamboo rings
Threaded through with corded string
And perched on top, a smiling skull
With empty eyes inside a shell

Within the bones there is the marrow
Moistened cane-shoots in the hollows
Of bamboo that has been cut
And soft and spongy to the touch

The heart flesh is a lotus bud
Its petals gone, and upside down
Upon the outside it is smooth
And inside's like a loofah gourd

In those who have some understanding
Hearts will be a bit expanded -
Blood within that's kept in store
Thus, mind and consciousness support -

The kidneys sit to either side
Like mango fruits that share a stem
Red-brown, like seeds of coral tree
Containing fat-filled cavities

The liver is two slabs of flesh
Located just below the breast
And reddish-brown it is, again
And covered by a thin membrane

The 'midriff' is the coat of flesh [13]
And of two kinds - concealed, and then
The unconcealed, and both are white
Like muslin rags, and that concealed

Is to be found ensconcing, thus
The heart and kidney, and the other
Can be found protecting flesh
Beneath the skin throughout the body -

Then the spleen is thereby known
As tissue of the belly's 'tongue'
It's blue, just like a chaste-tree bloom
Appearing like a black calf's tongue

It’s near the ceiling of the belly
On the left side of the heart -
If it’s removed through injury
A being from this life will part -

Around the heart, we have the lungs
Both red, like fig fruits, and the shape
Is that of unfair cuts of cake
With no nutrition we can take

The bowel tube measures thirty hands
It’s white, like lime that’s mixed with sand
And winds its way down through the gut -
A headless snake in pools of blood

That’s fastened to the throat above
And ending in the rectal duct -
The entrails are the fastening
In places where the bowel is coiled

They’re white, like water-lily roots
And found inside the bowel loops
Like strings inside the rope-rings of
A welcome mat for wiping feet -

The gorge is what’s been eaten, drunk
And chewed, and in the stomach sunk
And which is, then, part of the bowel -
It’s like the swelling in wet cloth

Towards the middle, when it’s twisted
And wrung out from both its ends
Inside, it’s like a bag of cloth
That’s soiled from wrapping meat debris

And this is where the food falls down
Into this cesspit, once it’s ground
By teeth and tongue, and held by spit
Its colour, smell, and taste, remit

Arriving there, it’s soused in bile
And phlegm, and thus ferments a while
And seethes among the writhing grubs
While bubbling like a stew on top

And after that the dung is then
Located at the bowel's end
Between the navel and the spine
Inside the rectum, and it measures

Just eight fingerbreadths in height
Resembling, thus, a bamboo tube -
And this is where the food and drink
Runs through to, once it has been cooked

And simmered by the stomach-fire
And here it is pressed down until
It is compacted, like brown clay
In bamboo joints, and there it stays -

The brain is marrow in the head
And white, the hue of toadstool flesh
Or milk that's turned, but not yet curd -
Four lumps of dough inside the head

Regarding bile, there are two kinds -
The free bile and the local bile
The free bile spreads, like oil on water
All throughout the body, and

When it's disturbed, the eyes turn yellow
And the body shakes and itches -
Local bile is then located
Near the liver, in between

The heart and lungs, and found inside
The bile bladder, which is like
A fairly large-sized loofah gourd
When it's disturbed, then beings will

Go crazy and become demented -
Phlegm is found inside the body
Lying on the stomach's surface
And like when the weeds and scum

That lie upon a duck pond's surface
Thus divide and spread together
Therein, when a stick is dropped
Into the water, so too, phlegm

Will thus divide and spread together
At the time when food and drink
Descends and drops into the stomach
If it's weak, the stomach's smell

Becomes corrupt, like rotten eggs
And then one's belching and one's mouth
Will reek like putrid, rotting ordure
Rising up, thus, from the stomach

When it is yet plentiful
It holds the stench beneath the surface
Acting like the wooden lid, thus
Of a privy, as containment -

Pus comes from decaying blood
The colouring of whitened leaves
And can be found in body parts
Where blood goes rotten and stagnates

When injuries have taken place
By wounds from thorns, or burns from fire
Or where carbuncles, abscesses
And boils, and so on, thus appear

And then there are two kinds of blood -
The stored blood, and the mobile blood
And, not including fleshless parts -
Like hair and nails and all the rest

The mobile blood thus permeates
This karmically-acquired body
Through its linking net of veins -
The stored blood fills the lower liver

And from there it splashes on
The kidney, heart and lungs and liver
Moistening and wetting them
So thirst does not accumulate -

And sweat is then the element
That trickles from the body pores
For if the body is, thus, heated
By a fire, or by the sun

It trickles out from all the pores
Of head hairs and of body hairs
Like water from the stems and stalks
Of lotuses pulled from a pond -

And fat, then, is an unguent, that
Is in the shape of muslin rags
And placed between the skin and flesh -
In those who are, then, somewhat stout

It soaks their bodies, thus, throughout
And then in others, it's found only
On the shank flesh, and the thigh flesh
And the back flesh near the spine

And on the flesh upon the belly -
Though it's labelled as an 'unguent'
It's not used, thus, as an oil
Because of it's repulsiveness -

And tears are then the element
That fall and trickle from the eye
When beings feel joy, and laugh out loud
Or grief and sorrow then take hold

Or when they eat ill-suited food
Or walk through smoke, and dust, and dirt
Then with these torments as their cause
They fill the eyes, or trickle out -

And grease is, then, a melted unguent
Like a film spread over water
When it is the time of bathing
And it's found on hands and feet

The nose, and shoulders, and the forehead
Specially when these parts are heated
Thus, by fire, or sun, and so on
Oozing out onto the skin -

Then spittle is the water, then
Collecting, thus, inside the mouth
That's mixed with froth, and coloured white -
When beings see some kinds of food

Or think of them, or if they put
Some food that's bitter, hot, or sharp
Or sour or salty in their mouths
Or when they're heart is feeling faint

Or when they're feeling nauseous
Then spittle shows, and trickles down
The cheeks on either side, before
It settles thereby on the tongue -

Then snot is the impurity
That slowly trickles from the brain
And fills the nostril cavities -
When curd's tied in a lotus leaf

But then it drips out afterwards
Because the leaf's pricked with a thorn
So too, when beings suffer turmoil
Of the elements, or weep

The brain then turns to stale phlegm
And oozes out onto the palate
Fills the nostrils, where it stays
Or then it slowly trickles out -

And oil of joints is slimy ordure
In the hundred-eighty joints
Existing in the body, thus
To thereby serve the function, then

Of lubricating all the joints
If it is weak, then when a person
Bends or moves, their bones will creak
And make a noise like snapping fingers -

Urine, then, is found inside
The storage sack that's called the bladder
It's secretion from the body
To the bladder is not clear

As when a porous pot without
A mouth is placed inside a cesspool
And the pot, then, still fills up -
It's way of exit, though, is clear

So thus the body should be scanned
From head to toe, and back again
From hair and nails and teeth and skin
To spittle, snot, and oil and urine -

Having viewed oneself this way
And all the parts are thus defined
Then it should also be applied
To other beings, then, as well

In such a way that they're divested
Of their aspects, thus, as beings
And only seen thereby, as just
Assemblages of many parts -

A sister thus devoted to
This mindfulness of body conquers
Boredom and delight,[14] and dwells
Transcending boredom as it swells

She also conquers fear and dread
And cold and heat, and so endures
All feelings of this worldly life
And thus attains direct insight -

So let a nun, if she is wise
Untiringly devote her days
To mindfulness of body, which
Rewards her in so many ways -

The mindfulness of breath is next
Of that which Buddha praised as best
It stops bad thoughts as they arise
In sisters, who in bliss abide -

A mind, in senses, so long lost
Should now be tethered to the post
Of in-breath, out-breath, by the rope
Of mindfulness, to give it hope

Just as a woman tames a mare
And ties it to a post, so here
Must mindfulness upon the mind
Be firmly to the object tied

So thus the nun who would do good
Should find retreat, within a Wood
And there become a leopard queen
To seize the path of non-returning -

“As the leopard, by her lurking
Seizes beasts, through patient stalking
Nuns who focus on their breath
Will seize the highest fruit as well” [Mil] -

She sits crosswise, with body straight
Now breathing long, now breathing short
She knows duration, and extent
She knows beginning, middle, end

The quiet and the strong, she knows
How in-breaths and the out-breaths go
For such, then, are the episodes
That happen at the sister’s nose

For when the object’s not discerned
Her mind and body are disturbed
And gross formations don’t subside
And breathing is still strong and wild

But with formations tranquilised
Her breathing, thus, starts to subside
Until she must investigate
To see if it exists or not -

“For mind and body are disturbed
When breath in excess thus occurs
But when the body’s undisturbed
Then breath with subtlety occurs” [M] -

Awareness of the wind is there
The in-breaths and the out-breaths, too
And mindfulness of breath is there
And concentration, thus, as well

For just as when a gong is tapped
The gross sounds will be well-observed
Yet, when the faint sounds have all stopped
Then consciousness will still occur

So likewise breaths are well attended
When in excess apprehended
Yet when breathing becomes faint
Then apprehension still remains

A nun who thus gives her attention
First through ‘counting,’ then ‘connection’
Sees her breathing as it travels -
Nose-tip, heart, and then the navel -

Counting should be done in pairs [15]
Just like someone who measures grain
So count ‘one-one,’ then, up to ‘ten’
And watch each breath come round again

And later one should break it down, then
When there is no interruption -
Not discerning any wind
That can be felt, outside or in -

And then ‘connection’ thus becomes
The mindfulness of breathing, that
Continues once the counting stops -
Applied with ‘touching’ and with ‘fixing’ -

Though she thinks she apprehends
And knows beginning, middle, end
The nun should now ‘fix’ on the place
Her breath will ‘touch’ within her face -

A woman, lame, who rocks a swing
Yet cannot move from where she stands
To see the plank move back and forth
Will still perceive this, by her hands

Just like someone who keeps a gate
Who does not question those inside
Or out, she just investigates
Whoever at the gate arrives -

So too, a sister in the know
Will watch her breathing come and go
While fixed upon the breath that’s slipping
Through the gate of nostril tip -

“Sign, in-breath, out-breath, are not object
Of a single consciousness -
By one who knows not these three things
Development is not obtained

Sign, in-breath, out-breath, are not object
Of a single consciousness -
By one who does know these three things
Development can be obtained” [Ps] -

How is it that these things are not
The object of one consciousness
Yet they are known, and manifest
An effort, task, and an effect?

Just like someone who cuts a tree trunk
With a saw upon the ground
With no attention on the saw teeth
Moving back and forth below

A sister sits, and has her mind
Established on the tip of nose
With no attention on the breaths
Revolving back and forth below -

“Whose mindfulness of breathing in
And out is perfect, well developed
Brought to growth in pliancy
Abandoning all tendencies

Without disturbed or restless thoughts
According as the Buddha taught -
‘Tis she, illuminates the world
Just like the full moon, free from cloud” [Thag] -

Without disturbed or restless thoughts
Then bodily disturbances
Will settle as the breath becomes
More subtle, and the body feels

As though it could leap off the ground -
When corporal breathing thereby ceases
Consciousness, thus, still occurs
With subtle breaths then as the object

Like someone who strikes a gong
Whose consciousness goes on occurring
As the sounds become more subtle
‘Til no longer manifest

At this point sisters should reflect -
“Now do these breaths, in fact, exist?
And if so, where - where do they not?
In whom are they, and in whom not?

There is no breath in mother’s womb
Or drowned in water, in the tomb
Or likewise in unconscious beings
Or those born into higher realms

As I am now in none of those
My breaths exist, I must suppose
Thus, on my nose I fix the sign -
This is the place where they do strike” -

For as the Blessed One has said -
“I do not say those who forget
And who are not aware of this
Develop breathing mindfulness”[M] -

And yet, compared to other subjects
Mindfulness of breathing is
The hardest training to develop -
It’s a field where only Buddhas

And their Daughters are at home
This is no minor matter, nor
Can it be gained by minor nuns
With more attention that’s applied

More peace and subtlety arise -
And that is why strong mindfulness
And understanding are required
For reaching high attainments here

For just as doing needlework
The finest needle is required
An even finer tool, we need
For boring out the needle’s eye

So too, a sister needs to have
The necessary mindfulness
And understanding, as she looks
At where breaths strike, and nowhere else

Just like the farmer, thus, who waits
For missing oxen at the place
Where they will drink, so too, the nun
Should fix her mind on what breaths touch -

Thus, fixing mind upon the sign
And driving out the things without
The wise will anchor, thus, the mind
Upon the breathings, in and out

And scrupulously guard the sign
Just as a queen protects her child
Or as a farmer guards her fields
And with attention, gains the yield -

And next, the sister separates
Both physical and mental states -
For breaths emerge from mind and form
Like blacksmith's bellows being blown -

When doubts regarding name-and-form [16]
In threefold time are overcome
She then applies the threefold aspects -
Pain, impermanence, and not-self

To the aggregates and states
Abandons imperfections, and then
Reaches contemplation, thereby
Of the parting of formations

Thus, through faith and mindfulness
And penetrating rise and fall
She reaches liberation, and
Receives the greatest gifts of all -

"So breathing in, and breathing out
My happiness will propagate
And breathing in, and breathing out
Then consciousness will concentrate

And breathing in, and breathing out
The self and not-self fades away
And breathing in, and breathing out
My consciousness I liberate

And breathing in, and breathing out
I'm breaking up the aggregates
And breathing in, and breathing out
Impermanence I contemplate

And breathing in, and breathing out
I'm giving up defilements
And breathing in, and breathing out
I enter in relinquishment" [Ps] -

Such mindful concentration
Will perfect the four foundations
And the factors of Enlightenment
Clear vision, and deliverance -

A sister thus devoted to
This mindfulness of breathing sees
The rise, the presence, and the fall
Of consciousness before her eyes

And thereby she can prophesy
Her final breaths, at end of life -
Through mindfulness of breath alone
Can end of life be always known -

So let a nun, if she is wise
Untiringly devote her days
To mindfulness of breathing, which
Rewards her ever in these ways -

Now, one who wants to then develop
Recollection, thus, of peace
Should set herself in solitude
And recollect Nirvana, or

The stilling of all suffering, thus -
"So in so far as there are dharmas
Whether they are formed or unformed
Fading off is thus pronounced

The best of them, that is to say -
Expulsion of all vanity
Elimination of all thirst
The abolition of reliance

Termination of the round
Destruction of all craving, thus
The fading off, cessation, and
The final peace that is Nirvana [A] -

For Nirvana is escape
Dissociated, thus, from craving
It's the truth, the other shore
The hard-to-see, the undecaying

Lasting, undiversified
The deathless, the auspicious, and
The marvellous, intact, and pure
The golden island, and the shelter" [S] -

When a sister thus recalls
The special qualities of peace
Her mind is not obsessed by greed
Aversion, or delusion, and

Her mind is right on that occasion
Faithful to this recollection
She will sleep and wake in peace
Her faculties and mind are peaceful

She has conscience, then, and shame
And full of confidence, as well
She is resolved to thus attain
The state that is superior

So therefore she is honoured and
Accordingly respected by
Her fellows in the life of virtue
Bound for happy destinies -

So let a nun, if she is wise
Untiringly devote her days
To recollection, thus, of peace -
Rewarding in so many ways

7 – The Divine Abidings

The four divine abidings, next
Were mentioned as the best subjects
For homing in on meditation -
Loving-kindness and compassion

Joy, and equanimity -
And of these four, a nun who starts
With loving-kindness, should review
How hate is hell, and patience pure -

“In those whose minds are prey to hate
Their rage will often make them kill
Thus, no rule’s greater, Buddhas say
Than patience kept with strongest will” [D] -

So thereupon, one should embark
Upon the growth of loving-kindness
Knowing hate as danger’s mark
And thereby nurturing one’s patience

Focussing upon herself
A nun should firstly contemplate -
“May I be happy, free from pain
And enmity towards all beings

For just as I want to be happy
Dreading pain, and fearing death
Thus, so do other beings, too -
I want them to have happiness”

And in this way, a great desire
For others’ welfare will arise
That they in happiness shall dwell
For it is as the Buddha said -

“The world I travelled with my mind
To find I’m dearer than all others -
Since they’re precious to themselves
Who loves herself won’t harm another” [S] -

Thus, a nun with happiness
Will fill herself with loving-kindness
After that, she recollects
A teacher who inspires respect -

"O may this sage be filled with joy
And always free from pain," she prays
And opens up, and then extends
This to a dear, beloved friend

And thinking thus, she then bestows
On neutral people, love that grows
Imagining they are the same
As all the loved ones she can name

With this in mind, she then moves on
To those who wish to do her harm
Recalling, if hate should arise
They were her mothers in past lives

For it is as the Buddha said -
"Were bandits to cut off your head
And yet you had an angry heart
Then that is not what I impart [M]

To repay angry men in kind
Is worse than to be angry first -
Do not with anger intertwine
And you'll emerge victorious

The good of both, one should promote
'Tis not for self, we look for peace -
Who shall another's anger know
Will find the ultimate release" [S] -

An angry person's ruled by rage
Engaging in misconduct of
Her body, speech and mind, thereby
And on her breakup after death

She reappears in states of loss -
The animals, or hungry ghosts
Perdition, or the hottest hells
Because she let her anger swell -

"Just like a log burnt at both ends
And damaged in the middle serves
For neither house nor fireplace
Such is an angry person, then" [A] -

Suppose an enemy has hurt you
In what looks like his domain
Why do you hurt your mind as well?
It is not, thus, in his domain

A nun abandons family
Who have been kind, and helpful too
So why not shun the enemy -
The anger that brings harm to you?

This anger that you entertain
Is gnawing at the very roots
Of all the virtues you defend
There is no greater fool than you

Another does ignoble deeds
So you are angry - how is this?
Why do you want to copy, too
The sorts of acts that she commits?

Suppose another, to incite
Provokes you with some odious act
Why suffer anger to arise
And be the puppet she enacts?

If you get angry, then maybe
You make her suffer, maybe not
Yet with the hurt that anger seeds
It’s punishment that you have got

If anger-blinded enemies
Set out to tread the path of woe
Do you by getting angry, too
Intend to follow, heel to toe?

If hurt is done to you by foe
Because of anger from your side
Then put your anger down, for why
Should you be troubled groundlessly?

Since anger lasts a moment’s time
Those aggregates, by which was done
The odious act, have ceased, so why
Do you persist with anger now?

How can you seek to hurt another
Somehow, in the other's absence?
Don't be angry, then, with her
The cause of hurt is from your presence

You're the owner of your deeds
And in your deeds you sow the seeds
Thus, anger is the source of karma
No one else is there to harm you

Like the man, who in his anger
Grabs a lump of excrement
And in his haste to strike the other
Only coats himself in stench -

"A fool who hates another person
Though they're pure, without chagrin
Such evil will come back to her
Like dust thrown up against the wind" [Dh] -

As such, the Blessed One has said
Recalling thus, from his past lives
That karma can be only shed
When using love to cancel spite

For when the Master was engaged
Through four incalculable ages
In fulfilling the perfections
Never once did hate corrupt him

Even when his enemy
Ensnared his kingdom and his queen
And had him buried in the ground
Yet still he saw him as a friend

Or when his hands and feet were severed
As an infant, and a sage
He still remained as calm as ever
Feeling not the slightest rage

Or when he was an elephant
His navel pierced by poisoned spear
To satisfy the hunter's wish
He cut his tusks off, then and there

The Blessed One has thus performed
Each one of these amazing acts
With patience of such quality
Unequalled by the deities

But if one's hate does not subside
Because defilements still abide
Well, then the sister should consider
All the cycles of Samsara -

It is in the endless round
That there are none who can be found
Who have not been your son or brother
Or your father, or your mother

Or your sister, or your daughter -
Of the one you hate, you ought to
Think of them without disgust
For you should contemplate them thus -

"She's been my dearest mother, who
Did nurture me, from in the womb
And taught me how to walk about
And fed me from her very mouth

A moral sense, did she instil
And nurtured me when I was ill
She worked until her bones were tired
Gave up things that she desired

Likewise, as my father, too
Who strived to feed his family
As shepherd, merchant, sailor, too
And risked his life to care for me

And as my brother, sister, son
She gave me help to get along
Without which, I would not be here
To practise Dharma without fear" -

If anger then should still persist
A nun should break it into bits
And after that a resolution
Made to look for its location -

Is it in the body hair
Or in the urine, snot, or dung?
Or is it in the grease or phlegm -
Within the kidney, teeth, or lungs?

Or is this anger in the heaps
Within desire, or in formations?
Is it angry with ideas
With the mind, or with sensations?

When a sister breaks it down
She finds no basis anywhere -
Just like a seed upon a needle
Or a painting in the air

And yet another way that hate
Can thus be made to dissipate
Would be to offer up a gift
For this can soften any rift

A gift for taming the untamed
Can be the greatest thing to preach -
Through giving gifts we can unbend
And melt the heart with kindly speech

And thus, when hate has been allayed
And loving-kindness does not stray
We dwell with equanimity
For self, and any enemy

If one discriminates between
The four - oneself, the ones held dear
Or neutral ones, and enemies -
Then ‘skilled’ is not the name for her

Nor ‘she with equal amity’
Or ‘she who sees impartially’ -
But noble is the sister who
Has broken down the boundaries

Who treats with equal amity
The whole world with its deities
On all she looks impartially
And thus she knows no boundaries -

“Now dwelling, thus, with full intention
Love pervading one direction
And the second, and the third
And then the fourth, of all the world

And so above, below, around
In equal measure it abounds
In loving-kindness thus, she sees
A world that’s free from enmity” [D] -

“Now may all beings thus be free
From hate and all anxiety
And in the hells, and all the realms
I pray they all live happily” [Ps] -

Upon pervading all the world
With kindness in her heart imbued
A sister cultivates compassion
In a corresponding fashion

Seeing those in misery
With injuries, in poverty
Without a bed where they can lay
Compassion should be felt this way -

“This being in adversity
Has been reduced to misery
Oh, how I wish she could be free
Without this wretched agony

Just like someone who’s being lead
Towards the place of execution
Though she might have been well-fed
She’s closing in on her destruction

Every step she’s getting nearer
To the presence of her death
It matters not if she was happy
Or she had a lot of wealth

Thus, for the want of one good deed
Performed in body, speech, or mind
She may inherit untold pain
Within the states of loss again” -

Compassion being thus inspired
That beings may be free from pain
A sister then should set her mind
On someone dear to her again

Recalling that no one's exempt
Within the round of birth and death
Her deep compassion then extends
To those she is indifferent

And as with loving-kindness, she
Then moved on to her enemy
Accordingly, in likewise fashion
For her foe, she feels compassion

Who, just like the others, too
At any time can tumble down -
"Her suffering, thus, she cannot see
How can she be my enemy?"

Reflecting thus, she breaks once more
The barriers between the four -
Herself, and then the ones held dear
The neutral ones, and enemies

And once her heart is filled this way -
The wish that all are free from pain
A sister moves on to employ
Development of selfless joy -

A nun who thus exudes with gladness
When a loved one's filled with joy
Will feel the same for all she sees
And so pervades them all with glee

If they were happy in the past
Her gladness would be yet aroused
And of the future thus, as well
In great success, she hopes they dwell

Thus, wishing joy for those held dear
She then moves on to neutral people
Lastly, then, she spreads it by
Directing it to hostile people

Who, just like the others, too
Of all possessions, they can lose -
“May they have wealth and happiness
And thus enjoy much more success” -

Reflecting thus, she breaks once more
The barriers between the four -
Herself, and then the ones held dear
The neutral ones, and enemies

And when her heart is filled with joy
At all the happiness deployed
A nun should cultivate the peace
Of perfect equanimity

For once she is, thereby, familiar
With the former three abidings
She should then become aware
Of all the risks awaiting there -

The first is that of gross attachment -
Grasping to the aforementioned [17]
Due to her acute intention
Handicaps her meditation

After that there is resentment
Due to gross association
With the three divine abidings -
Peacefulness should be residing -

“How then does a sister dwell
So equanimity can swell?
And how can she pervade the world
With equanimity imbued?

As when she sees a person who
Is neither loved, nor unloved, too -
As such, all beings she perceives
With perfect equanimity” [Vbh] -

Reflecting thus, she breaks once more
The barriers between the four -
Herself, and then the ones held dear
The neutral ones, and enemies

The four divine abidings, thus
Are understood as measureless
Like gods with minds immaculate
Do nuns upon them meditate -

If, by its process, it enlarges
Shows respect towards a friend
And severs ill will to that friend
As ‘loving-kindness’ it is known

Then if it moves good peoples’ hearts
Upon the sight of others’ suffering
By its means, suppressing suffering
As ‘compassion’ it is known

And furthermore, if it is scattered
Over those who suffer pain
Bestowed upon them by pervasion
As ‘compassion’ it is known -

If those endowed with it are glad
Or in itself it is, thus, glad
Or it’s the act of being glad
Then ‘gladness’ is the name it has -

If, through its process, it observes
Or in itself it thus observes
Or it’s the act of looking on
As ‘equanimity’ it’s known

And furthermore, if it discards
Thus, any bias, near and far
Supported by neutrality
Then it is ‘equanimity’ -

In aspect, loving-kindness then
Will boost the welfare of all beings
Likewise then, its function, too
Will give its preference to well-being

Manifested, then, from this
As swift removal of annoyance
Through an active breaking down
Of ill-will and of selfishness

Its nearest cause is, thus, to feel
A deep affection for all beings
Thriving when ill-will subsides
And failing when self-love abides -

In aspect then, compassion will
Allay the suffering of all beings
And in this way demolishes
The grief of others' suffering

Therefore, its function lies within
Not bearing others' suffering
And from this then, it's known to be
Of absolute non-cruelty

Its nearest cause is, thus, to see
Distress in those upset by grief
Succeeding, thus, when cruelty dies
And failing when distress abides -

And gladness, then, is typified
As joy in the success of others
Seeking only to redress
The harmful ways of selfishness

Its function, then, resides within
Remaining, thus, unenvious
Appearing as removal of
Displeasure and indifference

Its first preceding cause will be
To see success and other beings
Thriving when aversion dies
And not when revelries arise -

In aspect, equanimity
Promotes a deep neutrality
And likewise, then, its function, too
Is thus to see equality

It manifests, then, as suppression
Of approval and resentment
And its nearest cause, thus, sees
The truthful ownership of deeds -

“For beings own their deeds, and so
Whose choice is it, by which they will
Reach happiness and painlessness
And still maintain their great success?” [A]

And thus it is successful when
Resentment and approval dies
And ruined with the rising of
Unknowing equanimity -

The goal of these divine abidings
Is the bliss of insight and
An excellent attainment, thus
Within a future form, thereby

Respectively, for each, there is
Escape from ill-will, which is thus
The charity of loving-kindness
Then escape from cruelty, which is

Courtesy of great compassion -
Next, there’s freedom from aversion
Which results from joyfulness
And finally, escape from greed -

And, thus, approval and resentment
Comes from equanimity
So these are, thus, the aspirations
Of the four divine abidings -

Each one has two enemies -
A foe that’s near, and one that’s far
Or one that shares a quality
And one that is dissimilar

For loving-kindness, then, it’s greed
That is its nearest enemy
For greed is able to corrupt it
Due to similarity

So loving-kindness should well be
Protected from the foe of greed
And then its distant foe is ill-will
Which is thus dissimilar

Because it's like an enemy
Within a rocky wilderness -
For rage and loving-kindness, thus
Cannot be simultaneous -

Compassion's nearest enemy
Is grief, based on the worldly life
Since both will share in seeing failure
Grief, as such, has been described -

"When people see, as a privation
Failure to obtain desires
Or when recalling lost attainments
Grief in them will, thus, arise" [M] -

Its distant foe is cruelty
Which is, therefore, dissimilar -
For cruelty and compassion, thus
Cannot be simultaneous -

For gladness, then, it's worldly joy
Which is its nearest enemy
Awareness of success, they share
And joy, as such, has been described -

"When people see, as an achievement
Acquisition of desire
Or when recalling past achievements
Joy in them will thus arise" [M] -

And so its distant foe is then
Aversion, thus dissimilar -
For discontent and gladness, thus
Cannot be simultaneous -

And equanimity, then, has
Unknowing equanimity
As based upon the worldly life
As, thus, its nearest enemy

The reason is that both will share
An ignorance of faults and virtues -
Ignorance like this, that's blind
Has by the Buddha been described -

“The equanimity that rises
In a foolish, simple nun
Without subduing limitations
Or the future karmic fruit, while

Unperceiving of the danger
So her mind cannot surpass
The objects that her senses grasp
Is worldly equanimity” [M] -

Its distant foes will therefore be
Both greed and animosity -
For they are both dissimilar
To blankness, which is similar

For thus it is not possible
For states of equanimity
Along with hate and gluttony
To emanate concurrently -

So what then, is the start, the middle
And the end of these abidings?
Zeal consisting in desire
Is the start of all these things

And in the middle, then, there is
Suppression of the hindrances
And then the end is, thus, absorption
As attained in meditation

And their object is a being
Or it can be, thus, a group
Of which it is an apprehension
Rising as a mind conception

How, then, should they be extended?
As a farmer sets her field
And subsequently does her farming
So a sister sets a dwelling

And develops loving-kindness
Aimed at everyone within
And when her mind is, thus, encompassed
Loving-kindness then extends

To two more dwellings, three, then four
The village, kingdom, and beyond -
And likewise, she can do this for
Compassion, gladness, and so on

And what, then, is the outcome here?
Just as attainment of cessation
Comes from focus joined with insight
So too, equanimity

Arises from the first three of
The unexcelled divine abidings -
Just as rafters cannot be
Erected without scaffolding

But why are gladness, and so on
Distinguished as divine abidings?
Such divineness of abiding
Should be cognised in the sense

Of perfect and immaculate
For these abidings are the best
In having the right attitude
And state of mind towards all beings

Why, then, are there only four?
Their number four is due to Paths
Of Purity, and other sets -
Among these then, first, loving-kindness

Purifies excessive ill-will
And compassion is for those
Afflicted by excessive cruelty
Gladness, then, is thus for those

Afflicted by extreme aversion
Lastly, equanimity
Will purify excessive greed
For thus it is that interest given

To all beings is fourfold -
Conveying welfare, stopping suffering
Being glad at their success
And non-aligned neutrality

And what's the sequence to be followed?
To develop these abidings
One should set out to promote
The aspect known as welfare, first

Which loving-kindness has, thus, as
Its own unique, intrinsic aspect -
Next, on seeing or deciding
That all beings are yet suffering

Then the aspect to promote
Would be removal of all suffering
Which compassion has, then, as
Its own unique, intrinsic aspect -

Next, on seeing the success
Of those whose welfare has been wished for
And whose pain has been removed
Then one should nourish happiness

And gladness has this as its aspect -
When, thereby, there's nothing more
That needs accomplishment, therefore
The aspect that one should promote

Is that of calm neutrality -
Or just the state of looking on
Which equanimity, therefore
Contains innately as its own

And so, since their respective aims
Begin with welfare, and move on
The sequence then, should correspond
With loving-kindness, and so on -

As all divine abidings, then
Are thus immeasurable in breadth
Not limited to single beings
Or certain places, or extents

They are the Paths to Purity
With equanimity their aim -
Unbounded in capacity
So 'measureless' is, thus, their name

8 – Nutriment and the Elements

And now this exposition, then
To further the development
Of concentration, thus turns to
Repulsiveness in nutriment -

So herein, that which nourishes -
Or ‘brings on,’ ‘leads up,’ or ‘produces’
Its own fruit through its conditions
Thus, is known as nutriment

And separated into four -
First, nutriment that’s physical
Then nutriment of contact, and
Then nutriment consisting of

Volition from the mental sphere
And finally, the nutriment
Consisting, then, of consciousness
So these are all the nutriments -

The nutriment that’s physical
Is what is “made into a mouthful”
So its name comes from the object
But its aspect should be known

As one of nutrimental essence
Of materiality
And nutriment from contact, then
Is that which touches, so its aspect

Is the touching of an object
Which, thus, nourishes sensations -
That which wills is called volition
So it’s what collects itself

With allied states upon the object
This volition is, therefore
Entirely occupied with mind
And is the fuel for rebirth-linking -

Consciousness is that which thus
Conjectures rebirth as cognition
So, therefore, as nutriment
It thus engenders mind-and-matter

At the point of rebirth-linking -
Nutriment that's physical
Invites attachment, bringing peril -
"With attachment there is craving

And with craving, harm will come
For with this nutriment there's greed
And when there's greed, delight will grow
And in the consciousness thus planted

Mind-and-matter will combine
And stemming from this combination
There's an offshoot of formations
And this offshoot then produces

More becoming in the future
And with growth of more becoming
There is birth, old age and death
And from this, then, there's grief and sorrow

Lamentation and despair" [s] -
Then contact as a nutriment
Involves approaching, bringing peril -
"For approaching, then, is meeting

With perversions of perception
That perceive an object as
Perpetual and with a self
When it is emptiness, and void

For due to contact felt as pleasant
Pleasant feeling then ensues
And with that feeling as condition
There is craving and emergence

Of this seething mass of suffering" [s] -
Then volition of the mind
Is linked with reappearance, so
It furthermore entices peril -

"Reappearance is the rebirth
In a new becoming, which
Has no protection from the risks
Within the reappearance, then

For in unknowing, merit forms
So consciousness is in accordance
With the merit, thus performed -
The same thing also happens when

Formation of demerit and
The formless states is carried out" [S] -
Then consciousness as nutriment
Is thus involved with rebirth-linking

So it, too, entices peril -
"Rebirth-linking is connection
With the next becoming, which
Is therefore not immune from pain

Of the impending rebirth-linking -
With this nutriment there's greed
And when there's greed, delight will grow
So, as before, despair will follow" [S] -

And to show how they bring terror
Each one has a simile [18] -
The nutriment that's physical
Should, thus, be illustrated by

The story of the parents who
While in a desert, without food
Consumed the flesh of their dead child -
Not for pleasure, nor indulgence

Nor for beauty, nor their plumpness
As the Blessed One has said -
"Thus, solid food should be regarded
When such food is thereby known

The fivefold senses are perceived
And when the senses are, thus, known
The bonds of rebirth are unbound" [S] -
And contact as a nutriment

Should, thus, be illustrated by
The story of the cow that has been
Stripped of hide, and can't escape
The bites of creatures everywhere

Whatever place she travels to
As thus, the Blessed One has said -
“Thus, ‘food’ as contact should be witnessed
When such food is understood

Sensations, then, are well-perceived
And when those feelings are well-known
Then nothing more needs to be done”[s] -
Volition that is mental, then

Should thus be illustrated by
A pit of charcoal, burning bright
And deeper than a man is high
That when someone who wanders by

Is seized and dragged towards the pit
And loving life, instead of death
Her will would therefore wish to be
As far away as she can be

As thus, the Blessed One has said -
“Thus, ‘food’ as will should be regarded
When such food is thereby known
Then craving, too, is well-perceived

And when those cravings are well-known
Then nothing more needs to be done”[s] -
Then consciousness as nutriment
Should, thus, be illustrated by

The story of the robber, who
Is seized and taken to the King
Who thus determines to let her
Be smitten by one hundred spears

At dawn, and noon, and evening
And so her mind should, thus, be known
As thus, the Blessed One has said -
“For ‘food’ as consciousness, is thus

And when such food is understood
Then name-and-form are well-perceived
When name-and-form are, thus, well-known
Then nothing more needs to be done”[s] -

But of this fourfold nutriment
The nutriment that's physical -
What's eaten, tasted, drunk, and chewed
Is what is thus intended here -

Perception that's arisen as
Awareness of repulsive aspects
In that nutriment, is thus
'Repulsiveness in nutriment'

And those who want to, thus, develop
That perception of repulsion
Should then meditate upon
Ten aspects of repulsiveness -

First, as to 'going,' and then 'seeking'
And then 'using' and 'secretion'
Followed by 'receptacle'
Then 'undigested' and 'digested'

And then 'fruit,' 'outflow' and 'smearing' -
Firstly, therefore, as to 'going'
Even those who dwell, secluded
In the woods, or temple grounds

Must take their bowls and outer robes
And set out for the local town
In order to get nutriment
Like jackals for the charnel ground

And as they go, they have to tread
On dust and droppings, and old bread
On urine, excrement, and snot
And mud and spittle, and whatnot

Instead of looking at a shrine
As lovely as a pile of pearls
Their view is now of stumps and thorns
And broken roads that wait before

And when they reach the village gate
They're greeted by the carcasses
Of dogs and humans, and of snakes
And thus their senses are assailed

So thus they must experience
A trail of dust and excrement
Of stumps and thorns, and carcasses
Just for the sake of nutriment -

And secondly, then, as to ‘seeking’
Once they are inside the town
They wander, then, from house to house
Like beggars with no place to go

Through rain and mud, or dust and dirt
And holding up their feeding bowl
They tread in gutters, cesspools, and
Infested doorways seething with

Small insects and a sludge of worms
All mixed up with the washings of
Decaying fish, and rice and meat
And excrement that’s from the street

And flies then come and settle on
Their robes and bowls and on their heads
And when they enter in a house
Then some will give, and some do not

And those that do, give cooked rice from
The day before, with stale cakes, and
Some rancid jelly, sauce, and so on
Some, not giving, say “Pass on!

We can’t help you at all today”
While some stay mute, and look away
And others speak harsh words, such as -
“Turn round, bald-head, and go away”

Thus, seekers must experience
Repulsiveness within the town
From mud and worms, to savage words
Just for the sake of nutriment

Then thirdly, therefore, as to ‘using’ -
After nutriment is sought
They find a place outside the town
To eat at ease, while sitting down

Thus, untouched yet, with food to spare
With decent persons, they could share
But once their hands have been dipped in
They squeeze the food, and make it sodden

Placing it into their mouths
The lower teeth are, thus, a mortar
And the upper teeth, a pestle
With the tongue, then, as a hand

Then, pounded harshly by the teeth
Like dog food sitting in its trough
They turn it over with their tongue
And smear it all with spit and filth

And when it's mashed-up and besmeared
This compound, then, is thereby cleared
Of all initial smells and tastes
And thus reduced to a condition

Just like vomit in the kitchen
Yet although it is like this
It can be swallowed, as it is
No longer in the range of vision -

This is how repulsiveness
Should be reviewed, then, as to 'using'
Fourthly, then, as to 'secretion' -
Beings weak in merit have

The four secretions,[19] thus comprising
Bile and phlegm, and pus and blood
So when the food has, thus, arrived
At being chewed, and goes inside

In those whose bile is in excess
It then becomes as nauseous
As if it's coated in thick oil
For those whose phlegm is in excess

It then becomes as nauseous
As if it's stained by sour juice
In those whose pus is in excess
It then becomes as nauseous

As if it's rancid buttermilk
For those whose blood is in excess
It then becomes as nauseous
As if it's stained by putrid dye -

So this is how repulsiveness
Should be reviewed as to 'secretion'
Next, there is 'receptacle' -
So once the food's inside the belly

With secretions, fully stained
It's now in a receptacle
Which is no gold or silver plate
In contrast, if it has been swallowed

By a person ten years old
It finds itself inside a cesspit
Thus unwashed for ten whole years
Or twenty, thirty, forty, fifty

Sixty, seventy, and so on -
If the person who has swallowed
Is a hundred years old
It finds itself inside a cesspit

Thus unwashed a hundred years -
So this is how repulsiveness
Is viewed as to 'receptacle'
And sixthly, as to 'undigested' -

Once the nutriment arrives
In this receptacle, the 'cesspit'
Then it stays there, undigested
In aromas that are fetid

Tainted by the loathsome filth -
And just as when the rain has passed
The sun shines on a charnel ground
Until the carcasses of dogs

And snakes and human beings, there
Become a pit of froth and bubbles
Likewise, what has thus been swallowed
That day, and the day before

Remain there in that place together
Smothered by a loathsome layer
Made of phlegm, a seething mass
Of froth and bubbles from digestion

That's produced through fermentation
By the heating and the loathsome
Reeking stewing, thus arising
From the fire of the body -

This is how repulsiveness
Is studied as to 'undigested'
Seventh, then, as to 'digested' -
When it's been completely cooked, there

By the fire of the body
Not becoming gold or silver
As from smelting of their ores
Instead, it gives off froth and bubbles

As it turns to excrement
And fills up the receptacle
Which thus contains digested food
Like nut brown clay, pressed with a trowel

And firmly packed into a tube -
It also changes into urine
Filling up the bladder, too -
So, this is how repulsiveness

Should be reviewed as to 'digested'
Eighth, therefore, is as to 'fruit' -
So, when it has been rightly cooked
This ordure, then, is turned into

The head hair, and the body hair
And nails and teeth, and all the rest
But when it has been wrongly cooked
It thus becomes a hundred ills

Like itching, ring-worm, smallpox, plague
Consumption, fevers, flux, and more -
So this is how repulsiveness
Should be reviewed as to its 'fruit'

And ninth, therefore, is as to ‘outflow’ -
When it’s swallowed, it goes through
A single door, but after that
It then flows out by several doors, as -

“Eye-dirt flows out from the eye
And ear-dirt flows out from the ear
And from the nostrils, and so on” [Sn] -
And it is swallowed in large groups

But later, when it’s excrement
It’s just expelled in solitude -
“At first we eat with joy and lust
But then excrete with great disgust

The food and drink, so greatly prized
The crisp to chew, the soft to suck
Will enter by a single door
But through nine doors come oozing out

The food and drink, so greatly prized
The crisp to chew, the soft to suck
We like to eat in company
But then excrete in secrecy

The food and drink, so greatly prized
The crisp to chew, the soft to suck
A single night will be enough
To bring them to putridity” -

So this is how repulsiveness
Should be reviewed as to its ‘outflow’
Lastly, then, is as to ‘smearing’ -
At the time of using it

We smear the hands, and lips and tongue
Enhancing their repulsiveness
Yet even when they have been washed
It’s not enough to oust the smell

For just as when the rice is boiled
Its residue will rise and smear
The outer places of the pot
So too, when eaten, food will rise up

Once it's cooked and simmered by
The heating of the body fire
Turning into tartar, which
Will thus rise up, and smear the teeth

And turning into spittle, too
And phlegm as well, which then will smear
The tongue and palate, and so on
And thus it also turns into

The eye-dirt, ear-dirt and the snot
The urine and the excrement
Which then will smear the eyes and ears
The nose, and nether passages

And when these doors have, thus, been smeared
They cannot, then, be fully cleared
Though one may wash them every day
And after washing some of them

The hands have to be washed again
And even then the smell will stay -
So this is how repulsiveness
Should be reviewed, then, as to 'smearing' -

Those who thus devote themselves
To this profound perception of
Repulsiveness in nutriment
Will see their minds retreat and shrink

From craving, thus, for flavours, so
Their nourishment from nutriment
Will therefore have no vanity
Their only focussed goal, therein

Is crossing over suffering
As one who seeks to cross the desert
Eats the flesh of her dead child -
So five-cord sense-desire greed

And thus the aggregate of form
Are therefore, fully understood
And mindfulness of body, too
Will reach a peak in sisters, who

Investigate the ‘undigested’
The ‘digested,’ and the rest -
And so the nun embarks upon
A way that’s in conformity

With apprehension, thus, of foulness
Bound for happy destinies -
So that is the description of
Repulsiveness in nutriment -

And now this exposition, then
To further the development
Of concentration, thus turns to
Discussion of the elements -

“Good people, it is just as though
A clever butcher killed a cow
And then was seated at the crossroads
With the cow cut into pieces -

Thus, a sister should review
Her body, then, however placed
And in whatever way disposed
As made up of the elements

For in this body, there are four -
The earth and water elements
And then the fire element
And then the element of air” [D] -

So what is, therefore, meant by this?
As when a butcher feeds his cow
And brings it to the slaughterhouse
And once he has then slaughtered it

He clings to the the perception ‘cow’
So long as it’s not sliced and carved
Nor butchered and divided up
Into its multitude of parts

But when he has, then, carved it up
He loses the perception ‘cow’
And, thus, the concept ‘meat’ occurs -
He does not think "I'm selling cow”

Or “They are are taking cow away”
Instead, he thinks “I’m selling meat”
Or “They are taking meat away” -
So too, the nun, while still a fool

Does not relinquish the perception
‘Living being,’ ‘woman,’ ‘person’
While she does not scan her body
Heedless as to how it’s placed

Or how it may be, thus, disposed
As made up of the elements
But once she sees her body as
Consisting, thus, of elements

She loses the perception of
A ‘living being,’ ‘woman,’ ‘person’
And her mind establishes
Itself upon the elements -

The meaning, then, of ‘element’
Is that of individual ‘essence’
And the meaning, then, of ‘essence’
Is composed of ‘emptiness’

The meaning, then, of ‘emptiness’
Is that of ‘not-a-living-being’ -
Thus it is then, only ‘earth’
Which is an individual essence

In the sense of emptiness
And also not-a-living-being
That’s the element itself -
The same thing, then, is also said

Of all the other elements -
The element of earth, is therefore
That which is the foothold for
Concomitant material states

And then the water element
Is that which is of their cohesion -
And then that of fire is thus
The element of ripening

The element of air is, then
The element of their conveyance
And it's also of distension
As the Blessed One has said -

"So what is, therefore, the internal
Element of earth, my friends?
Whatever lies internally
Inside oneself, that's hard and harsh

And thus acquired through karma, and
Adhered to, then, as 'I' and 'mine'
That is to say, the head hair and
The body hair, the teeth, the nails

The flesh and skin, the bones and sinews
Marrow, kidney, heart and liver
Midriff, spleen, the lungs and bowels
The entrails, gorge, the brain, and so on

And whatever else inside
That's hard and harsh, and thus adhered to
That's what's known as the internal
Element of earth, my friends -

And what is, therefore, the internal
Element of water, friends?
Whatever lies internally
Inside oneself that's watery

And thus acquired through karma, and
Adhered to, then, as 'I' and 'mine'
That is to say, the bile and phlegm
The pus and blood, the spittle and

The snot and sweat, the grease and fat
The oil of joints, and then the urine
And whatever else inside
That's watery, and thus adhered to

That's what's known as the internal
Element of water, friends -
And what is, therefore, the internal
Element of fire, friends?

Whatever lies internally
Inside oneself that's fiery
And thus acquired through karma, and
Adhered to, then, as 'I' and 'mine'

That is to say, however whereby
One is heated, burns up, ages
And so on, and also whereby
What is eaten, drunk, and tasted

Is completely, thus, digested
And whatever else that's fiery, and
Internal and adhered to -
That's what's known as the internal

Element of fire, friends -
And what is, therefore, the internal
Element of air, my friends?
Whatever lies internally

Inside oneself that's made of air
And thus acquired through karma, and
Adhered to, then, as 'I' and 'mine'
So it's the up-winds and the down-winds

And the winds inside the belly
And the ones within the bowels
And those that course through all the limbs
And then the in-breath and the out-breath

And whatever else inside
That's made of air, and thus adhered to
That's what's known as the internal
Element of air, my friends"[M] -

A sister, then, who wishes to
Thus, focus on the elements
Should set herself in solitude
And scan her body, and discern

The fourfold elements this way -
"Within this body, that which is
Congealed or harsh, is known as 'earth'
And that which is cohesion, or

Fluidity, is therefore ‘water’ -
That which has the aspect of
Maturing, then, or heat, is ‘fire’
And what then distends or moves

Will be the element of ‘air’” -
So in this way she scans her body
Over and again as ‘earth’
As ‘water,’ ‘air,’ and ‘fire,’ too

And breaks it down into its parts
As simply only elements
As not-a-living-being, and
As emptiness, without a soul -

“For when a space is thus enclosed
With bones and sinews, flesh and skin
The absence of a living being
Becomes ‘material form’ therein” [M] -

But if this is yet unsuccessful
It should then be blended with
Observance of repulsiveness
And mindfulness of body, thus -

These things called ‘head hairs’ thus do grow
Upon the skin there on the skull
And just as when some grasses grow
Upon an anthill, they don’t know that

“We grow on a termite-mound”
Nor is the termite-mound aware that
“Certain grasses grow on me”
So too, the skull skin does not know that

“Certain head hairs grow on me”
Nor are the head hairs, thus, aware that
“On the skull skin we do grow” -
The hair and skin is thus devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
‘Head hairs’ are just one component
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
These things called ‘body hairs’ do grow
Upon the skin there on the body

Just as when some grasses grow
Upon the central square within
An empty village, they don’t know that
“We grow on a central square”

Nor is the central square aware that
“Certain grasses grow on me”
So too, the skin that thus envelops
All the body, does not know that

“Body hairs do grow on me”
Nor are the body hairs aware that
“On this body skin we grow” -
The hair and skin are, thus, devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
‘Body hairs’ are one component
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
There are these things called ‘nails,’ that grow
On tips of fingers, and of toes

And just as when some children pierce
Madhuka kernels with their sticks
The sticks they strike with, do not know
“Madhuka seeds are put on us”

Nor do the kernels, therefore, know that
“We have been applied to sticks”
So too, the fingers and the toes
Are unaware, and do not know that

“Nails do grow upon our tips”
And neither do the nails, thus, know
“On fingers and on toes we grow” -
These things are, therefore, all devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘nails’ are just one factor
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
There are these things called ‘teeth,’ that grow
Within the jaw bones, just as when

Some posts are anchored in stone sockets
And then fastened with cement
And as the sockets do not know that
“Posts have thus been placed in us”

Nor are the posts, therefore, aware
“In sockets, thus, we have been placed”
So too, the jaw bones do not know that
“Teeth do grow inside of us”

And neither do the teeth, thus, know
“Inside the jaw bones, thus, we grow” -
These things are, therefore, all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing

Thus, the ‘teeth’ are just one factor
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of

The solid element of earth -
This thing called ‘skin’ is to be found
Enveloping the body round
And just as when a big lute is

Enveloped with a damp ox-hide
The lute itself, then, does not know that
“I am wrapped in damp ox-hide”
Nor is the damp ox-hide aware

“This lute has thus been wrapped by me”
So too, the body does not know that
“I am covered up by skin”
Nor does the skin itself, then, know

“A body has been wrapped by me” -
These things are, therefore, all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘skin’ is just one factor

Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -

This thing called ‘flesh’ is to be found
Thus, plastered on the frame of bones
And just as when a wall is plastered
With thick clay, it does not know that

“I am plastered with thick clay”
Nor is the clay itself aware
“A wall is overlaid by me”
The frame of bones, too, does not know

“Nine hundred bits of flesh, thereon
Are plastered, thus, all over me”
Nor does the flesh itself, then, know
“I overlay a frame of bones” -

These things are, therefore, all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘flesh’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is

Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
These things called ‘sinews’ are located

In the body, binding bones
And, as when sticks and withies are
With creepers, thus, together bound
The sticks and withies do not know

“By creepers we are bound together”
Neither do the creepers know
“By us are sticks and withies bound”
So too, the bones are not aware

“By sinews are we bound together”
Neither do the sinews know
That “bones are, thereby, bound by us” -
These things are, therefore, all devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
‘Sinews’ are just one component
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
And next regarding, thus, the ‘bones’ -
The heel bone, then, is to be found

Thus, holding up the ankle bone
The ankle bone is to be found
Supporting, then, the shin bone, then
The shin bone holds the thigh bone, and

The thigh bone holds the hip bone, then
The hip bone holds the backbone, and
The backbone, thus, the neck bone, and
The neck bone, then, is acting as

A pillar for the cranium -
Which rests upon the neck bone, then
The neck bone on the backbone, and
The backbone on the hip bone, then

The hip bone on the thigh bone, and
The thigh bone on the shin bone, and
The shin bone on the ankle bone
And finally the ankle bone

Is resting on the heel bone, as when
Bricks or timber are built up
And those beneath are unaware
“We stand up, holding those above us”

Nor do those above them know
“We each depend on those below us”
Thus, the heel bone’s not aware
“I’m holding up the ankle bone”

Nor is the ankle bone aware
“I’m holding up the shin bone,” and then
So it goes, up through the bones
Until we reach the cranium

Which, thus, itself has no idea
“I’m resting on the neck bone,” and
The neck bone, therefore, doesn’t know
“I’m resting on the back bone,” and then

So it goes, down through the bones
Until we make it to the heel bone -
All these things are thus devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing

Thus, the ‘bones’ are just one factor
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of

The solid element of earth -
This thing called ‘marrow’ can be found
Within the multitude of bones
And just as when boiled bamboo sprouts

Are then stuffed into bamboo joints
The bamboo joints are unaware that
“Bamboo sprouts are stuffed in us”
Nor are the bamboo sprouts aware that

“We’re inside the bamboo joints”
And so the bones are unaware that
“Marrow is inside of us”
Nor is the marrow, thus, aware that

“I am now inside the bones” -
These things are, therefore, all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
‘Marrow’ is just one component

Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -

This thing called ‘kidney’ can be found
On each side of the heart, thereby
It’s fastened by a sturdy sinew
Starting just below the neck

Before it then divides in two
And as a pair of mango fruits
Are bound together by their stalk
So likewise, therefore, then it seems

The stalk itself is unaware that
“Mango fruits are bound by me”
Nor are the mango fruits aware that
“By a stalk, we are thus bound”

So too, the sinew does not know that
“Kidneys are adhered by me”
Nor are the kidneys, thus, aware that
“By a sinew, we are bound” -

These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘kidney’ is one factor
Of this body, and it is

Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
This thing called ‘heart’ is to be found

Inside the body, near the middle
Of the framework of the ribs
And just as when a piece of meat
Is placed inside an old cart’s frame

The old cart’s frame, then, doesn’t know
“A piece of meat’s inside of me”
Nor does the piece of meat, thus, know that
“I’m inside an old cart’s frame”

The inner framework of the ribs
Is also heedless of the fact
“There is a heart inside of me”
Nor is the heart itself aware that

“I’m contained inside the ribs” -
These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘heart’ is just one factor

Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -

This thing called ‘liver’ can be found
Inside the body, on the right
Between the pair of breasts, therein
And just as when twin lumps of meat

Are stuck upon a cooking pot
The cooking pot, then, does not know
“Twin lumps of meat are stuck on me”
Nor are the lumps of meat aware

“We’re stuck upon a cooking pot”
So too, the body on the right
Between the breasts, is unaware
“A liver is inside of me”

Nor does the liver, therefore, know
“I’m on the right, between two breasts” -
These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing

Thus, the ‘liver’ is one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of

The solid element of earth -
Regarding, then, the ‘midriff,’ next -
The hidden midriff can be found
Surrounding, thus, the heart and kidney

While the open midriff is
Beneath the total torso skin
And just as when a slab of meat
Is wrapped in rags, it does not know that

“I’m enveloped in these rags”
Nor are the rags themselves aware
“A slab of meat is wrapped in me”
So too, the heart and kidney, and

The flesh of the entire torso
Are completely unaware that
“I’m concealed within a midriff”
Nor, then, does the midriff know

“The heart and kidney and the flesh
Of the entire torso are
Completely, thus, concealed by me” -
These things are therefore all devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘midriff’ is one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
The ‘spleen’ is then located near
The top side of the stomach lining

On the left side of the heart
And just as when a lump of dung
Is on the top floor of a barn
The barn itself is unaware

“A lump of dung is sitting on
The upper floor inside of me”
Nor is the lump of dung aware
“I’m on the top floor of a barn”

So too, the lining doesn’t know
“A spleen is near my upper side”
Nor is the spleen itself aware
“It seems I am located near

The top side of the stomach lining” -
All these things are thus devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘spleen’ is just one factor

Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -

The ‘lungs’ are found between the breasts
Inside the body, hanging over
And concealing, heart and liver
Just as when a bird’s nest is

Suspended, thus, inside a barn
The barn itself is unaware
“A bird’s nest hangs inside of me”
And neither does the bird’s nest know that

“I’m suspended in a barn”
So too, the body does not know
“Two lungs are hanging inside me”
Nor are the lungs themselves aware that

“We’re suspended in a body” -
All these things are thus devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘lungs’ are just one factor

Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -

This thing called ‘bowel’ is to be found
Extending from the stomach base
And ending in the anal tube
And just as when the carcass of

A large beheaded rat snake is
Entwined inside a trough of blood
The trough itself is unaware
“A rat snake’s carcass has been thus

Entwined and placed inside of me”
Nor does the rat snake’s carcass know that
“I am in a trough of blood”
So too, the body does not know

“A bowel is coiled inside of me”
And neither is the bowel aware that
“I am coiled inside a body” -
All these things are thus devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘bowel’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
These things called ‘entrails’ can be found
Between the coils of the bowel

Binding them together, and so
Just as when a rope ring has been
Bound together by its ropes
The rope ring, therefore, does not know that

“Ropes are holding me together”
And the ropes themselves don’t know that
“This rope ring is bound by us”
So too, the bowel is unaware that

“Entrails are, thus, binding me”
And neither do the entrails know
“This bowel has, thus, been bound by us” -
These things are therefore all devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘entrails’ are one factor
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
This thing called ‘gorge’ is everything
That has been eaten, drunk, and tasted

Lying in the stomach now
As when the vomit of a dog
Is lying in its feeding bowl
The feeding bowl is unaware that

“Vomit lies inside of me”
And neither does the vomit know that
“I am lying in a bowl”
So too, the stomach’s unaware that

“Gorge is lying inside me”
Nor is the gorge itself aware that
“I am lying in a stomach” -
All these things are thus devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘gorge’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -
This thing called ‘dung’ is to be found
Inside the rectum of the bowel

And just as when some soft brown clay
Is pressed inside a bamboo joint
The bamboo joint is unaware that
“Soft brown clay is inside me”

Nor is the clay itself aware that
“I am in a bamboo joint”
So too, the rectum does not know that
“Dung is stored inside of me”

And neither is the dung aware that
“I am stored inside the rectum” -
All these things are thus devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing

Therefore, ‘dung’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of

The solid element of earth -
This thing called ‘brain’ is to be found
Within the bosom of the skull
And just as when a lump of dough

Is stuffed into an old gourd rind
The old gourd rind is unaware
“There is a lump of dough in me”
Nor is the lump of dough aware that

“I am in an old gourd rind”
So too, the skull is unaware
“There is a brain inside of me”
And neither is the brain aware that

“I am placed inside a skull” -
These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Thus, the ‘brain’ is just one factor

Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, rigid, made up of
The solid element of earth -

Then after that, there is the ‘bile’ -
The free bile, then, is to be found
Immersed in the entire body
Local bile, though, will be found

Located in the bile bladder -
When a cake is soaked in oil
It is completely unware that
“I am being soaked in oil”

And neither does the oil know that
“I am soaking through a cake”
So too, the body does not know that
“I am being soaked in bile”

And neither does the free bile know
“A body is immersed by me” -
And just as when a loofah gourd
Is filled with water from the rain

The gourd itself is unaware that
“There is water inside me”
Nor is the water, thus, aware that
“I am in a loofah gourd”

The bile bladder, also, then
Is heedless of the bile within
Nor does the local bile know that
“I am in a bile bladder” -

All these things are thus devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘bile’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is

Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -

This thing called ‘phlegm’ is to be found
Upon the surface of the stomach
Just as when a cesspool has
A skin of froth, it does not know

“There is a skin of froth on me”
Nor is the skin of froth aware that
“On a cesspool, thus, I lie”
So too, the stomach does not know that

“Phlegm is found on top of me”
Nor is the phlegm itself aware that
“On a stomach I am found” -
These things are therefore all devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘phlegm’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -
This thing called ‘pus’ is to be found

Where blood stagnates, and then goes bad
In body organs damaged by
Such things as splinters, thorns, and burns
Or where such things as boils appear

As when a tree, thus, oozes gum
Through being hit by, say, an axe
The tree part which has thus been struck
Is unaware “there’s gum in us”

Nor is the gum itself aware
“I’m in the tree part that was struck”
So too, the wounded body parts
Are unaware “there’s pus in us”

And neither is the pus aware
“I’m in a wounded body part” -
These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing

Therefore, ‘pus’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of

The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -
And then there is this thing called ‘blood’ -
The mobile blood, like bile, is found

Thus, soaking the entire body
And the stored blood, then, is found
Thus filling up the lower liver
Wetting kidney, heart, and lungs -

Defining of the mobile blood
Is thus the same as that of free bile
But for stored blood, it’s as follows -
Just as clods and stumps are wetted

By the water from the rain
Thus, seeping through a porous pot
The clods and stumps are unaware that
“We are being soaked in water”

Neither does the water know that
“I am wetting clods and stumps”
So too, the lower liver and
The kidney, heart, and lungs don’t know that

“We are being soaked in blood”
Nor is the blood itself aware
“I fill the lower liver, and
I wet the kidney, and so on” -

These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘blood’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is

Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -

This thing called ‘sweat’ is to be found
Within the pores of body hairs
From which it thereby trickles out
When there is heat from fire and sun

And just as when some lily stems
And lotus stalks are pulled from water
Thus, the stems and stalks don’t know that
“Water trickles out of us”

Nor is the water, thus, aware
“I trickle from the stalks and stems”
So too, the openings of the pores
Of body hairs are unaware that

“Sweat is trickling out of us”
Nor is the sweat, therefore, aware
“I’m trickling from the openings, now
Within the pores of body hairs” -

These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘sweat’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is

Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -

This thing called ‘fat’ is to be found
Pervading the entire body
Of a person who is stout
And on the shank flesh, and so on

Of people who are somewhat lean
And just as when a heap of meat
Is covered by a yellow rag
The heap of meat is unaware

“A yellow rag is next to me”
Nor is the yellow rag aware
“A heap of meat is next to me”
So too, the flesh that can be found

Upon the body, or the shanks
Is unaware “fat’s next to me”
Nor is the fat itself aware
“I am located next to flesh” -

These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘fat’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is

Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -

These things called ‘tears,’ when thus produced
Are to be found, then, filling up
The optic sockets, trickling out -
When sockets of young palm tree kernels

Inundate with water, then
The sockets thereby do not know that
“There is water inside us”
And neither does the water know that

“I am in the kernel sockets”
Optic sockets, too, don’t know that
“There are tears inside of us”
And neither are the tears aware that

“We are in the optic sockets” -
All these things are thus devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘tears’ are just one factor

Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore

Of cohesion is their mode -
This thing called ‘grease’ is to be found
Upon the palms and backs of hands
And on the soles and backs of feet

The nose, the forehead, and the shoulders
When, thus, heated up by fire -
If oil is poured on rice potage
The rice potage is unaware that

“Oil is spread all over me”
And neither is the oil aware that
“I’ve been spread on rice potage”
So too, the parts consisting of

The palms, the soles, the nose, and so on
Aren’t aware that “there is grease now
Caked and spread all over me”
And neither is the grease aware that

“I have now been caked and spread
Upon the palms, the nose, and so on” -
All these things are thus devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing

Therefore, ‘grease’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of

The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -
This thing called ‘spittle’ can be found
Upon the surface of the tongue

Once it's descended from the cheeks
When its conditions thus arise -
If water seeps into a hollow
Sitting in a river bank

The hollow yet is unaware that
"Water oozes into me"
Nor is the water, thus, aware
"I'm permeating now into

A hollow in a river bank"
So too, the tongue is unaware that
"Spit has fallen from the cheeks
And thereby is remaining now

Upon the skin on top of me"
Nor is the spittle, thus, aware
"I have descended from the cheeks
And now I'm lying on the tongue" -

These things are therefore all devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, 'spittle' is one factor
Of this body, and it is

Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -

This thing called 'snot,' when it's produced
Is found within the nostrils, or
It's thereby trickling out of them -
A bag that's filled with rotting curd

Has absolutely no idea
"There's rotting curd inside of me"
Nor is the rotting curd aware that
"I am placed inside a bag"

So too, the nostrils do not know that
"There is snot inside of us"
And neither is the snot aware that
"I'm located in the nostrils" -

All these things are thus devoid
Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘snot’ is just one factor
Of this body, and it is

Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -

The ‘oil within the joints’ is found
Inside the multitude of joints
That serve the function, therefore, of
Thus, lubricating all the joints

And just as when an axle has been
Lubricated with some oil
The axle, therefore, does not know that
“Oil is lubricating me”

Nor is the oil itself aware
“This axle, I am lubricating”
So the joints are unaware that
“We are thereby lubricated

By the oil within the joints”
Nor is the oil of joints aware
“I lubricate the joints of bones” -
These things are therefore all devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing -
‘Oil within the joints’ is, therefore
One component of this body
Void of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -
This thing called ‘urine’ can be found

Collected, then, inside the bladder -
When a porous pot’s positioned
Upside down inside a cesspool
Then the pot is unaware that

“Cesspool filtrate is in me”
Nor does the cesspool filtrate know that
“I am in a porous pot”
So too, the bladder does not know that

“There is urine inside me”
Nor is the urine, thus, aware that
“I’m collected in a bladder” -
All these things are thus devoid

Of mutual interest and reviewing
Therefore, ‘urine’ is one factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, liquid, made up of
The element of water, therefore
Of cohesion is its mode -
When one has given their attention

To the body parts this way
Then that attention should be placed
Upon the fourfold aspects of
The element of fire, as

Whatever warms up from within
Then this is just a certain factor
Of the body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too

Not-living, heated, made up of
The element of fire, therefore
Of maturing is its mode
And that whereby the body ages

Is, therefore, another factor
Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, heated, made up of

The element of fire, therefore
Of maturing is its mode -
Whatever way that one burns up
Then this is just a certain factor

Of the body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, heated, made up of
The element of fire, therefore

Of maturing is its mode
And also whereby what is eaten
Drunk and tasted, and digested
Is then just another factor

Of this body, and it is
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, heated, made up of
The element of fire, therefore

Of maturing is its mode -
Succeeding that, then, one's attention
Should, therefore, be placed upon
The six components, thus, within

The element of air, therein -
The 'up-winds' are the forces that
Are going up within the body
Thus, they are another factor

Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, mobile, made up of
The element of air, and therefore

Of distending is their mode -
The 'down-winds' are the forces that
Are going down within the body
So they are just one component

Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, mobile, made up of
The element of air, and therefore

Of distending is their mode -
The 'winds inside the belly' are
The forces, thus, outside the bowels
And thus they are another factor

Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, mobile, made up of
The element of air, and therefore

Of distending is their mode -
The ‘winds inside the bowels’ are then
The forces, therefore, in the bowels
And so they are just one component

Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, mobile, made up of
The element of air, and therefore

Of distending is their mode -
The ‘winds that course through all the limbs’
Are forces that produce extending
Flexing, moving, and so on

And thus they are another factor
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, mobile, made up of

The element of air, and therefore
Of distending is their mode -
The ‘in-breath and the out-breath’ are
The winds respired through the nostrils

So they are just one component
Of this body, and they are
Devoid of thought, and empty, too
Not-living, mobile, made up of

The element of air, and therefore
Of distending is their mode -
And furthermore, regarding aspects -
In the innards at the start

The aspect of rigidity
Is from the element of earth
And then the aspect of cohesion
Which is also thus included

Is the element of water
And the aspect of maturing
Is element of fire
So its aspect of distension

Is the element of air -
And in the parts then made of liquid
It's the aspect of cohesion
That's the element of water

And the aspect of maturing
Which is also thus included
Is the element of fire
And its aspect of distension

Is the element of air
Its aspect of rigidity
Is from the element of earth -
And that which has the mode of heating

With its aspect of maturing
Is the element of fire
And its aspect of distension
Is the element of air

And that which is rigidity
Is from the element of earth
And so its aspect of cohesion
Is the element of water -

That which has the mode of moving
With its aspect of distension
Is the element of air
Its aspect of rigidity

Is from the element of earth
And so its aspect of cohesion
Is the element of water
And its aspect of maturing

Is the element of fire -
Meditators, who define
The elements, then, in this way
Will see the elements become

Thus, clearly evident to them -
And furthermore, they should apply
Attention as to meaning, too
Both separately and generally -

For if it's spread out, then it's earth
And if it flows and satisfies
Then it's the element of water
If it heats up, then it's fire

And if it blows, then it is air -
Yet all of them are elements
Because of bearing their own aspects
And adhering, then, to suffering

And because they sort out suffering
In the endless round of rebirths
With its great variety
According to their agency

For they 'assort' through living beings
As they are borne by living beings
As burdens are by burden bearers
They're a 'sorting out' of suffering

And of pain, because no power
Can be wielded over them -
By means of them as instruments
The suffering of the round of birth

Is always being 'sorted out'
Thus 'sorted' into elements
Whereby this suffering is engendered
And distributed within them -

Furthermore, the elements
Are thus included in eight states -
Nutrition-essence, colour, odour
Taste, and then the elements -

"From combination of these eight
There comes the common usage 'head hairs' -
Separately, then, from these eight
Such things as 'head hairs' are not there" -

The element of earth, reduced
And powdered to the smallest atom
Thus, is held together by
The element of water, which is

Measuring just half as much -
It's guarded, then, from slippery footing
By the element of fire -
The element of air distends

And so it doesn't dissipate
Instead of getting scattered, then
Arriving at alternate states
Of male and female, and so on

And manifested then from this
As bigness, smallness, length, and shortness
Toughness, firmness, and so on -
The liquid water element

That has the function of cohesion
Having earth then as its base, is
Guarded over thus by fire
And distended, then, by air -

It doesn't seep, or run away
And thus provides the juice of growth -
The element of fire, therefore
Cooks what's eaten, drunk, and tasted

Heating up is thus its aspect
And it's founded, too, on earth
And thus, by water, held together
And distended, then, by air

Providing for this body, and
Ensuring its correct appearance
So this body, thus maintained
Displays no putrefaction, then -

The element of air traverses
Through the limbs and has the aspect
Of distending and of movement
Founded, once again, on earth

And thus, by water, held together
It's maintained by fire, and
It functions to distend the body
So the body won't collapse

But stands erect and is propelled
And flexes, wriggles, and extends
The hands and feet, in postures, thus
Of walking, standing, sitting, and

Reclining, like a magic trick -
This mechanism thus continues
And deceives all foolish people
With their gender, and so on -

The element of earth, therefore
Retains the aspect of compactness
With a function of presiding
As foundation, or a base

And manifested as receiving -
Then the water element
Retains the aspect of pervading
With a function to increase

And also to intensify
And manifested as cohesion -
Then the fire element
Retains the aspect, thus, of heat

Which has a function to mature
And manifested from this as
Continued malleability -
And then the element of air

Retains the aspect of distending
With a function to cause motion
Manifested as arising
In contiguous locations -

Thus, there is variety
In aspect, function, and so on
Of all the fourfold elements
For those of earth are, thus, one case

And those of water are another -
So it goes for all the others
Yet, there is a unity
Among the elements, as well

For all of them are instances
Of ‘base materiality’
Because they do not go beyond
Vexatious pliability

And also there is unity
Because they are ‘great primaries’
Thus, manifested on a scale
That’s great in continuity

Of which there are, thereof, two types -
Continuance not gained through karma
Which is also understood
As the ‘unclung-to,’ or ‘non-grasped’

And one that is acquired through karma
Which is understood as ‘clung-to’
Or it’s also called the ‘grasped’ -
The first type is described below -

“Two times a hundred thousand leagues
And forty thousand more as well -
This earth, the ‘bearer of all wealth’
Has that much thickness, as they tell” -

Examples of the second type
Which is inherited through karma
Are the bodies of the fishes
Turtles, and the deities -

“O sisters, harken now to me
The individual creatures, therein
Dwelling in the boundless sea
Are measureless in count of leagues” [A] -

And yet the elements are also
‘Great deceivers,’ showing as
Derived materialities
When they themselves are otherwise

For, just as spirits hide their dread
With prepossessing shapes and colours
So they can deceive, thereby
So too, these elements conceal

Their aspects, functions, and so on
By showing as the pleasing forms
Of male or female bodies, or
As pleasing shapes and gestures of

The fingers, eyebrows, and the limbs -
Thus, simple people they deceive
Because, therefore, they don't allow
Their actual essence to be seen

And furthermore, these elements
Are thereby 'great in maintenance'
Because they have to be sustained
By great amounts of requisites

Since all of them have thus emerged
Through means of clothing, food, and more
That must be gathered every day
So thus their maintenance is great -

The 'clung-to' and the 'unclung-to'
Are also, then, the basis of
The rising of 'great alterations' -
Here, the alteration of

The 'unclung-to' is evidenced
Upon emergence of an aeon
And the 'clung-to' in disturbance
Taking place within the body -

"Conflagration's flame explodes
Straight from the ground, and races higher
Up until the Brahmá heaven
When the world is burnt by fire

A worldly system measuring
One hundred thousand millions wide
Subsides, as with its furious waters
Floods dissolve the world, besides

One hundred thousand million leagues
A whole world system's broad extent
Is rent and scattered, when the world
Succumbs to the air element -

The bite of wooden-mouths can make
The body stiff - to all intent
When roused is earthly element
It might be gripped by such a snake

The bite of rotten-mouths can make
The body rot - to all intent
When roused is water element
It might be gripped by such a snake

The bite of fiery-mouths can make
The body burn - to all intent
When roused is fire element
It might be gripped by such a snake

The bite of dagger-mouths can make
The body burst - to all intent
When roused is its air element
It might be gripped by such a snake" -

And so they are in unity
Because they carry their own aspects
And they always grasp at suffering
Which they then impose on beings

Also, they have no exemption
From the fundamental aspect
Of just being elements -
They also share impermanence

Because, as elements, they are
Contingent on destruction and
They're painful, for they bring on fear
And terror, and then furthermore

They're empty, as they have no core
And thus depend upon each other
As conditions for the others
As foundation, and support -

And so they are, then, indistinct
Because they always rise together
With the states of colour, taste
Nutrition-essence, and so on

And yet they can be separated
By their individual aspects -
Furthermore, they are conditions
For the other elements -

The element of earth, which is
Cohered by water, kept by fire
And distended, thus, by air
Is a condition for the others

Acting, thus, as their foundation -
And the element of water
Which is founded, then, on earth
Maintained by fire, enlarged by air

Is a condition for the others
Acting, thus, as their cohesion -
Then the element of fire
Which is also based on earth

Cohered by water, built by air
Is a condition for the others
Acting as their maintenance -
And then the element of air

Thus also founded, then, on earth
Cohered by water, kept by fire
Is a condition for the others
Acting, thus, as their distension -

When there’s movement back and forth
Or when there is a lowering down
Then earth and water are conditions -
When there is a lifting up

Or shifting to the front or side
Then fire and air are the conditions -
Those who have this view will see
The elements becoming clear

And so the nun devoted to
Defining of the elements
Absorbs herself in emptiness
Without discerning any beings

And removing concepts, so
She doesn't have false notions, then
Of ogres, spirits, beasts, and more -
She conquers fear and dread, and thus

Aversion and delight, as well
She's not excited or depressed
By pleasant or unpleasant things
And bound for happy destinies -

Defining the four elements
Is ever the savant's resort
The noble meditator lion
Makes this mighty theme her sport

Existence in the round of rebirths
Is a cramped and crowded place
That swarms with the defilements
Of craving, clinging, and so on -

Development of concentration
Is the nearest cause of insight
With this method, one embraces
Merging with wide open spaces

As the Blessed One has said -
"Thus, nuns should nurture concentration
Those with such facilitation
Are correct in contemplation" [s] -

Thus they fail not in devotion
To pursuit of concentration
Clearing out defiled pollution
With rewards past calculation -

Entering upon cessation
Those who have produced attainments
Thus abiding in the Dharma
Blissfully, will reach Nirvana

Part 3: Understanding *(Paññá)*

9 – The Aggregates

Once a sister is possessed
Of concentration's benefits
She then moves on to understanding
That which is much more demanding -

What is understanding, then?
It is of many different types
And so the kind intended here
Consists of insight knowledge, and

The profitable consciousness -
This understanding is a knowing
In a mode that's separate from
Those of perception and cognising -

Though this state of knowing's present
In perception, consciousness
And also, thus, in understanding
Yet perception just perceives

An object, say, as blue or yellow
And it cannot penetrate
Its aspects as impermanent
And painful, and devoid of self

And consciousness will know the objects
Also, then, as blue or yellow
And it can discern their aspects
But it cannot bring about

By effort and endeavouring
The realisation of the path -
Yet insight knowledge will not only
Know the object as just stated

It can also bring about
The penetration of those aspects
And it also brings about
By effort and endeavouring

The realisation of the path -
Suppose there were three people, then -
A clueless child, a villager
And last of all, a money-changer

And they see a heap of coinage
Lying on the changer's counter -
Thus, the child sees shapes and patterns
Knowing not what they are worth

The villager, as well, sees patterns
And he knows that they have value
But he cannot thus discern
If they are real or fake, and more -

The money-changer knows them all
By sight and sound and taste and smell
And knows their weight and where they're made -
The illustration here, is that

Perception's like the clueless child
Because it apprehends appearance
In the mode of blue and so on
Consciousness is like the town-man

As it sees the mode as blue
And also penetrates the aspects
As impermanent and so on -
Knowledge is the money-changer

Seeing, thus, the mode as blue
And penetrating all the aspects
And extending further still
To realisation of the path -

When understanding is then found
Where cognisance-perception are
Its difference is a subtlety
That's consequently hard to see

As noble Nágasena said [20] -
"What Buddha did was difficult -
Defining states of consciousness
And all of its concomitants, as

'This is contact, this sensation
This perception, this formation
Also, this is consciousness' -
And in a single thing, no less" [Mil] -

Its aspect is to penetrate
Existing essences of states
As thus outlined by Nágasena
With a function to dissolve

The darkness of delusion, which
Conceals those very essences
And manifested from this, then
As cognisance and non-delusion

As the Ancient Ones have said -
“For one who is, then, concentrated
Knows and sees the deepest truth” [A] -
Its cause is, therefore, concentration

Furthermore, this understanding
Is of three kinds, as consists in
‘What is reasoned,’ ‘what is learnt’
And ‘knowledge through development’ -

The first, through preference, views, or choice
Or aptitude in contemplation
As to deeds, or deeper truths, like
“Matter is impermanent

And likewise feelings, and perception
And formations, and volitions
And then consciousness, as well”
Is not acquired from a teacher

And then next is when this truth
Is heard from masters, and construed -
Then ‘knowledge through development’
Is thus attained through realisation -

Furthermore, this understanding
Is of three kinds, as consists in
Apprehending aggregates -
So first one’s own, which is, therefore

‘Interpreting the inner,’ and then
Apprehending those of others
Or external matter, is
‘Interpreting the outer,’ and

The apprehension, then, of both
In their totality is called
‘To know the inner and the outer’ -
In this sense, it is three kinds

But it is also of four kinds
In knowledge of the Noble Truths
And penetration of each one
So first, the knowledge that’s contingent

On the truth of suffering
And then the knowledge which occurs
Contingent on its origin
Then that contingent on cessation

Of all suffering and all pain
And then the knowledge that’s contingent
On the path to that cessation
Thus it is four kinds this way -

And how then can it be developed?
Dharmas classed as aggregates
And elements and bases and
The Noble Truths, and also then

Conditional origination
Are therein the ‘soil’ from which
This understanding, thus, will grow
The ‘roots’ are virtue, there below

And concentration is as well
Its ‘trunk’ is purity through knowledge
And a pure vision, so
A sister who’s perfecting these

Once she has mastered all the ‘roots’
Should fortify her understanding
Of those things that are the ‘soil’
Before developing the ‘trunk’ [21] -

Of aggregates, then, there are five
Of that which we must purify -
Materiality, and then
There’s feeling and perception, and

Formations, and then consciousness -
Materiality is then [22]
All the states that have the aspect
Understood as ‘being molested’

By the objects of the senses
Furthermore, there are two kinds -
There’s that which is the primary form
And then there’s that derived by clinging -

Herein, then, the primary one
Is made up of the elements
With earth and water, fire and air -
Their aspects, functions and so on

Were given definitions in
The chapter on the elements
But as for cause, then each one has
The others as its nearest cause -

Derived materiality
Is broken into twenty-four -
As eye and ear and nose and tongue
And body, vision, sound and smell

And flavour, then the faculties
Of feminine and masculine
The faculty of life, and then
The heart-basis, and after that

There’s bodied intimation and then
Verbal intimation, and
The element of space, and then
There’s lightness, malleability

And wieldiness, and growth
And continuity, and ageing
And impermanence of matter -
And the final one we have is

Nutriment that’s physical -
Yet tactile data is omitted
From this list because, therefore
It’s not considered thus to be

Derived materiality -
Conversely, it consists of, then
Three of the four main elements -
Excluding water as cohesion -

“Earth and heat and air, in water
Constitute a tangible -
That ‘I can touch fluidity’
Is always, therefore, misconceived” -

The aspects of the eye are, then
A primal readiness to grasp [23]
The impact of the ocular
To bring one’s selfhood to the fore

It’s attribute can also be
The primal readiness to seize
Originated by its karma
Grasping for the ocular

The function of the eye is, thus
To pick up objects from the data
Placed among the ocular
That bring one’s selfhood to the fore

So thus it’s manifested as
The footing of eye-consciousness
Its cause is born of karma’s source
Arising from desire to see -

The aspects of the ear are, thus
A primal readiness to grasp
The impact of the audible
To bring one’s selfhood to the fore

It’s attribute can also be
The primal readiness to seize
Originated by its karma
Grasping the auricular

The function of the ear is, thus
To pick up objects from the cadence
Placed among the audible
That give the selfhood precedence

So thus it's manifested as
The footing of ear-consciousness
Its cause is born of karma's source
Arising from desire to hear -

The aspects of the nose are, thus
A primal readiness to grasp
The impact of the odorous
To bring one's selfhood to the fore

It's attribute can also be
The primal readiness to seize
Originated by its karma
Coming from aromal needs

The function of the nose is, thus
To pick up objects from the senses
Placed among the odorous
That give the selfhood precedence

So thus it's manifested as
The footing of nose-consciousness
Its cause is born of karma's source
Desiring what is odorous -

The aspects of the tongue are, thus
A primal readiness to grasp
The impact of the flavourful
To bring one's selfhood to the fore

It's attribute can also be
The primal readiness to seize
Originated by its karma
Chasing after flavour's clasp

The function of the tongue is, thus
Selecting objects from the senses
Placed among the flavourful
That give the selfhood precedence

So thus it's manifested as
The footing of tongue-consciousness
Its cause is born of karma's source
Desiring what is flavorous -

The body's tendencies will be
A primal readiness to seize
The impact of tactility
To bring one's selfhood to the fore

It's attribute can also be
The primal readiness to seize
Originated by its karma
Grasping for tactility

The body's function is to be
Selecting objects from the senses
Placed among tactility
That give the selfhood precedence

So thus it's manifested as
The base of body-consciousness
Its cause is born of karma, which
Arises from desire to touch -

Within the world shaped by the 'I'
We find, then, what is called the 'eye'
Its sensitivity's located
In the middle, black and round

And in that feature, there appears
All the objects, far and near
Spreading through the optic tiers
Just like oil through cotton layers

Aided by the elements
In holding, fixing, growth, and movement [24]
Life-prolonged and furnished, thus
With colour, odour, flavour, touch

It's fortified by nutriment
And temperature and consciousness
And serves as both the fleshly base
And access for eye-consciousness -

The aural sensitivity
Is in the hearing cavity
It's shaped just like a finger-stall
And cloaked in fibres, fine and brown

Assisted by the elements
In holding, fixing, growth, and movement
Life-prolonged and furnished, thus
With colour, odour, flavour, touch

It's fortified by nutriment
And temperature and consciousness
And serves as both the fleshly base
And gate for ear-consciousness -

The nasal sensitivity
Is in the nasal cavity
It's shaped just like a cloven hoof
And covered by a fibrous down

Assisted by the elements
In holding, fixing, growth, and movement
Life-prolonged and furnished, thus
With colour, odour, flavour, touch

It's fortified by nutriment
And temperature and consciousness
And serves as both the fleshly base
And access for nose-consciousness -

The tasting sensitivity
Is in the middle of the tongue
It's shaped just like a petal tip
That's soft below, and rough above

Assisted by the elements
In holding, fixing, growth, and movement
Life-prolonged and furnished, thus
With colour, odour, flavour, touch

It's fortified by nutriment
And temperature and consciousness
And serves as both the fleshly base
And access for tongue-consciousness -

The body sensitivity
Is in its whole entirety
Just like a cloth that soaks up liquid
Where there's matter to adhere

Assisted by the elements
In holding, fixing, growth, and movement
Life-prolonged and furnished, thus
With colour, odour, flavour, touch

It's fortified by nutriment
And temperature and consciousness
And serves as both the fleshly base
And gate for body-consciousness -

Like snakes and birds and crocodiles
And dogs, and other animals
That gravitate to their resorts
Like water, space, and charnel grounds

So too, the eye and all the rest
Will gravitate to their resorts
The visible, the audible
The odorous, and all the rest -

So as regards the 'visible'
It has the aspect of impinging
Of itself upon the eye
And functions as objective field

Of consciousness within the eye
And manifested from this, then
As its resort, thereby, as well
The elements are its main cause

And it's of many kinds, therefore
As 'blue or yellow' and so on -
And next there is the 'audible'
Which has the aspect of impinging

Of itself upon the ear
It functions as objective field
Of consciousness within the ear
And therefore also manifests

As its resort, thereby, as well
The elements are its main cause
And it's of many kinds, therefore
As 'drum sound, lute sound' and so on -

Then, as regards the ‘odorous’
It has the aspect of impinging
Of itself upon the nose
It functions as objective field

Of consciousness within the nose
And manifested, then, from this
As its resort, thereby, as well
The elements are its main cause

And it’s of many kinds, therefore
As ‘root smell, wood smell’ and so on -
And next there is the ‘flavorous’
Which has the aspect of impinging

Of itself upon the tongue
It functions as objective field
Of consciousness within the tongue
And therefore also manifests

As its resort, thereby, as well
The elements are its main cause
And it’s of many kinds, therefore
As ‘root taste, stem taste’ and so on -

And next, there is the ‘feminine’
With female sex, then, as its aspect
And a function that will signal
“This collection is a female”

Showing as the reason for
The mark, the sign, and work, and thus
The ways pertaining to the female -
Then there is the ‘masculine’

Which has the male sex as its aspect
And a function that will signal
“This collection is a male”
Appearing as the reason for

The mark, the sign, and work, and thus
The ways pertaining to the male -
And both of these are coextensive
With the body as a whole

Like body-sensitivity -
And next, the ‘faculty of life’
Then has the aspect of maintaining
All conascent kinds of matter

So it works to cause occurrence
In the aforementioned matter
Manifested from this as
Establishing their presence, so

Its nearest cause will therefore be
The elements to be sustained
Maintaining states as they arise, then
As a wet-nurse does a prince

When he is still a helpless infant
And occurring through connection
With those states, just like a pilot
Yet it doesn’t cause occurrence

Once it goes through dissolution
For it lacks a presence, and
It lacks a following occurrence
So it’s not perpetuated

At the time of dissolution
As it is, itself, dissolving
Like the flame within a lamp
When wick and oil are thus depleted

Yet it’s not without the power
To maintain, or make occur
Because it does accomplish these
Contingently, as they arise -

And next, there is the ‘heart foundation’
With its aspect of sustaining
Mind and consciousness, and so
Its function, thus, is to observe them

Manifested from this, then
As thus their base and sustenance
In which it can be understood
In its dependence on the blood

As stored within the heart, therein
And of the kind described before
Within the exposition on
The mindfulness of body, then

Assisted by the elements
In holding, fixing, growth, and movement
Life-prolonged and furnished, thus
With colour, odour, flavour, touch

It's fortified by nutriment
And temperature and consciousness
And serves as fleshly base and gate
For states of mind and consciousness -

Then 'bodied intimation'
Is the mode and alteration
In the mind-air element
That causes active body movement

Intimatable through body
As excitement of the body
Thus, its function shows intention
Manifested as the cause

It's both the cause and the expression
Of that physical excitement
And originates from temperature
And karmic deeds, and nutriment

And all of this is interlocked
From mind, originating
Intimating of intention
As a bodied intimation -

There's a kind of alteration
Separate from the sight of motion
And the way that it is known
Is apprehension of intention

For intention can't be seen
Within the movements of a tree
But we can meet this apprehension
In the movements of the feet

For we can thus infer the meaning
When we apprehend a reason
Yet for objects merely present
Recognition will be absent

For a sound without an object
Won't awaken any meaning
And a barely sighted being
Won't communicate it, either -

And then 'verbal intimation'
Is the mode and alteration
In the mind-earth element
From which the act of speech occurs

It's intimatable through speech
As activation of the voice
And thus intention is its function
Manifested as the cause

It's both the cause and the expression
Of that vocal activation
Intimatable, as always
From the sound within the speech

Like when we see a sign for water
Intimating "here is water"
So, with seeing bodied shakes
Or from the voice, we intimate -

The 'element of space,' then, has
An aspect of delimiting
Materiality, and so
It functions to display the boundaries

Of that matter, and its limits -
Manifested as confines
In states of gaps and apertures
And also as untouchedness

So matter that's delimited
Is thus it's cause, and so we say
Of matter, thus, delimited
"It's up, or down, around, or that" -

And ‘lightness,’ then, ‘of matter’ has
The aspect of celerity
Its function is to thus dispel
The heaviness of matter, and

It’s manifested from this, then
As light transformability
Its nearest cause is matter that
Has light transformability -

And ‘malleability of matter’
Is then pliable in aspect
With a goal to lose rigidity
And build on flexibility

And manifested from this as
Accord with any kind of action
Pliant matter is its cause -
Then ‘wieldiness of matter’ has

The aspect of tractility
Its function is to thus dispel
Non-wieldiness within the body
Manifested, then, as strength

Its nearest cause is wieldy matter -
And then ‘growth of matter’ has
The aspect, then, of setting up
Its function is the genesis

Of instances of matter, and thus
Manifested as a launching
Or as a completed state
Its nearest cause, matured matter -

‘Continuity of matter’
Has the aspect of occurrence
With a function, then, to anchor
Keep in place, and thus, hold down

It’s manifested from this as
Non-interruption in the flow
Its nearest cause is matter, then
That must be anchored or held down -

Next, with its aspect of maturing
‘Ageing’ therefore ripens matter
In its varied instances -
Its function leads to termination

Of those very instances
And manifested, then, from this
As loss of newness, without losing
Individual essences

Its nearest cause is matter that
Is ripening, or maturing, then
As evidenced through alteration
Taking place in teeth, and so on -

Then ‘impermanence of matter’
Has the aspect of destruction
Total in collapse and fall
Its function leads to subsidence

Of matter as it falls away
And manifested from this, as
Destruction, thus, and then decline
It’s nearest cause, the end of matter -

‘Nutriment that’s physical’
Then has the aspect, therefore, of
An essence that’s nutritious, so
Its function is the feeding of

A wide variety of matter
Manifested from this as
Supporting and consolidating
And its cause is matter, then

That must be nourished and maintained, thus
With somatic food, thereby -
So it’s the nutrimental base
For beings to sustain themselves -

Herein, so far, we have discussed
A basic sketch of that which is
The first of all the aggregates
Known as materiality -

Among the next four aggregates
What has the aspect ‘being felt’
When thus by group it is collated
Is the ‘feeling aggregate’

And next among the aggregates
What has the aspect of perceiving
When by group it is adduced
Is the ‘perception aggregate’

The fourth among the aggregates
The one that’s aspect comes from forming
When by group it is collated
Is the ‘forming aggregate’

The final aggregate is then
Identified with cognisance
So as a group it’s therefore called
The ‘aggregate of consciousness’ -

Since all the aggregates can be, thus
Understood more easily
When consciousness is understood
We shall begin with consciousness

Which, though its essence is combined
Within the aspect of cognising
Can be split into three kinds -
Constructive, tainted, non-aligned [25]

Constructive consciousness, thereby
Can further into four divide -
The sense sphere and the form-realm, and
The formless, and ‘beyond-mundane’

And sense sphere consciousness, thereby
Can further into two divide -
When thus by joy accompanied
Or backed by equanimity

The mind by joy accompanied
Can rise with knowledge, unassisted
Like an offer freely made
With pure intent, for merit gained

If gifts with joy have been dispensed
While lacking in unselfishness
Or urged by others, consciousness
Has knowledge, but it's with assistance -

Mind by joy accompanied
While lacking knowledge, unassisted
Is the next kind that arises
In the sense sphere consciousness

Just like the joy in children, when
On seeing nuns, and acts of virtue
They then give what's in their hands
Instinctively, and offer homage

If the kids behave like this
But urged on by their relatives
Then consciousness is lacking knowledge
And it's also been assisted -

When the mind on these occasions
Has no cause of joy, therein
Through finding thus no excellence
In giver, gift, recipient

We see the next four minds arise [26]
Through giving, offering, and the like -
A consciousness accompanied
By balanced equanimity

Thus, sense-constructive consciousness
Is equanimity or joy
And therein grouped accordingly -
Assisted or accompanied

Then tainted sense-sphere consciousness
Is broken down into three classes -
That which has greed as foundation
That with hate, and that delusion

That with greed as base, thereby
Can further into two divide -
When thus by joy accompanied
Or backed by equanimity

The mind by joy accompanied
Can rise when placing wrong view first
Not seeing danger in desire
And revelling in eagerness

While lacking prompting and assistance -
If it's slow and urged by others
Then this mind, therefore, has wrong view
But with prompting and assistance -

When someone is just content
Without assigning wrong views first
As she indulges in desire
Then it is the third result

And if the mind here yet is slow
And urged by others in desire
Consciousness will lack wrong view
And yet will also be assisted -

When the mind on these occasions
Has no cause of joy, thereby
Through seeing, then, no excellence
In sense desire, or want of joy

We see the next four minds arise [27]
Through stealing, yearning, and the like -
A consciousness accompanied
By neutral equanimity

Thus, craving-tainted consciousness
Is equanimity or joy
And grouped as when it is confused
Or needing prompting or assistance -

That with hate as base, thereby
Can further into two divide -
As when by grief accompanied, or
With ill-will identified

This mind can thus be quick and eager
Lacking prompting and assistance
Or thus prompted, when it's slow
In acts of murder, and so on -

The next, delusion base, thereby
Can be divided in two kinds
And both with equanimity -
Connected to uncertainty, or

Parallel with agitation
In both cases consciousness
Is tangled up with indecision
Or with inattentiveness

Thus, tainted sense-sphere consciousness
Is three, delusion, ill-will, greed
And then it's grouped accordingly
Assisted or accompanied -

The consciousness that's non-aligned
Is next, and said to be two kinds -
Resultant, and then functional
In all four spheres, actual

And that of sense-sphere consciousness
When it is non-aligned, therefore
And its results are positive
Can thus be viewed accordingly

These positive results, thereby
Can further into two divide -
As that which does not have root-cause
And that in which there is root-cause

The ones that are without root-cause
Have no intention as their cause
Beginning with eye-consciousness
Then up to mental consciousness -

The aspect of eye-consciousness
Is optic data cognisance
Its function is to only have an
Optic data field to gather

Then that of ear-consciousness
Is aural data cognisance
Its function is to only have an
Aural data field to gather

That, then, of nose-consciousness
Is odor data cognisance
Its function is to only have an
Odor data field to gather

And the next, tongue-consciousness
Is flavour data cognisance
Its function is to only have a
Flavour data field to gather

That of body-consciousness
Is contact data cognisance
Its function is to only have a
Contact data field to gather

Elemental-consciousness
Has senses data cognisance
Its function is to only have a
Senses data field to gather

That, then, of mind-consciousness
Is of 'six-object' cognisance
Its function is to scrutinise
The fields of objects in its 'eyes' -

Then of results that have root cause
Their causes are non-greed, non-hate
And non-delusion, and they're grouped
By joy and so on, as above [28] -

Now after form, then, it was said
"What has the aspect 'being felt'
When thus by group it is collated
Is the 'feeling aggregate'" -

Yet, though it has this single essence
Of the aspect 'being felt'
It is yet threefold as to kind -
Constructive, tainted, non-aligned

So thus it should be classified -
Constructive, when with mind applied
Or tainted, when it is not so
Or lastly, when it's non-aligned -

This aggregate, when analysed
Can further into five divide, as
Tactile pleasure, pain, and joy
And grief, and equanimity

The aspect of the first is, then
Desired felt experience
Its function is to boost those states
That please the feeling aggregate

Thus manifested, then, from this
As bodily delight and bliss
Its first preceding cause will be
That of the body faculty

And that of pain, the next, is then
Unwanted felt experience
Its function is to wither states
Within the feeling aggregate

Thus manifested, then, from this
As bodily afflictions, thus
Its first preceding cause will be
That of the body faculty

The aspect, thus, of joy is then
Desired known experience
Its function is to profit from
Desire in the aggregate

Thus manifested, then, from this
As mental happiness and bliss
Its first preceding cause will be
Therefore, of calm tranquility

And that of grief, the fourth, is then
Unwanted known experience
Its function is to thus exploit
Displeasure in the aggregate

And manifested, then, from this
As mental pain and hardship, thus
Its nearest cause invariably
Will be within the heart-basis

And equanimity is then
A neutral felt experience
It functions not to touch the states
Within the feeling aggregate

Thus manifested, then, from this
As non-invasive peacefulness
Its first preceding cause will be
A mind devoid of happiness -

So thus it is that pain and bliss
Will either gladden or afflict
By acting one way on the body
And another on the mind

But not so equanimity
And this is why the latter is
Therefore described as just one class
Where mind and body have no trespass

Next, as what was said preceding -
“One that’s aspect is perceiving
When by group it is adduced
Is the ‘perception aggregate’”

Yet though it has this single essence
Of the aspect of perceiving
It is threefold as to kind -
Constructive, tainted, non-aligned

And since there is no consciousness
Dissociated from perception
It will have the same divisions
Stated, thus, for consciousness

But though its classed like consciousness
In aspect, knowledge, and the rest
Its general aspect, nonetheless
Is just perception, more or less

Its function is of recognition
Labelling as a condition
When perceiving once again
So that we know “this is the same”

Like farmers putting cows on tender
Carpenters when checking timber
Shearers in the case of wool -
Perception is the basic tool

It manifests, thus, as the action
Making sense of apprehension
Like the blind who ‘see’ an object
As a neural field, therein

Its first preceding cause will be
Objective fields that thus appear
Just like perception in a fawn
That views a scarecrow as a man -

Now as it has been said before -
“The one that’s aspect comes from forming
When by group it is collated
Is the ‘forming aggregate’”

It has the aspect of formation
For it is accumulation
Thus, it can’t remain in stasis
As volition is its basis

In this way, accumulation
Forms itself from those formations
Thus it’s said “they form the formed
And that is why they are formations”

Though it is, thus, singlefold
Within this aspect, as just told
It is yet threefold as to kind -
Constructive, tainted, non-aligned -

The sense-constructive consciousness
When by formation analysed
Is grouped as ‘firmness,’ followed by
‘Conditioned,’ and ‘inconstancies’

The first group is the ‘constant ones’ -
Or ‘firmness’ as was said above
It starts with contact, more or less
And moves on up to consciousness

And contact then, is that which touches
Though it's not material
For there are many instances
When 'touching' is still obvious

Like when a mouth starts watering
When one sees others do food-tasting
Or it could be loss of movement
When a sight is frightening

Its function is to have an impact
Even though it's non-adherent -
Sight and sound, too, have impingement
As there is yet a connection

Even though they're non-adherent -
Thus, there is agreement that
With sight and sound of eye and ear
'Touched' should still apply to them

And so, like this, it can be said
Of contact's impact on the object
This impingement is concurrence
Of the mind and object, therefore

This is how it manifests
As a concurrence of the three -
The eye, the object that we see
And also, then, eye-consciousness

Its first preceding cause will be
Objective fields that come in focus
Rising automatically
As per reaction's faculty -

Volition, next, is that which wills
Collecting is the meaning, and
It's aspect is the state of willing
Constantly in readiness

Its function is accumulating
Manifested, then, from this
As organised coordinating
Marshalled with an urgency -

Of functions, it accomplishes
Its own and those of others, too
As senior pupils, managers
Head carpenters, and housewives do -

Applied thought, next, directs the mind
To hit upon, is what is meant
In aspect, then, it thereby works
To mount the mind upon the object

With a goal to strike and thresh
The object of one’s meditation
And it also manifests
As leading on to concentration

In this way it intervenes
As consciousness then interferes
At the time of first arousal
Of a thought at our disposal

Like a bird that spreads its wings
About to soar into the air
Or as a bee, that plunges down
Upon a flower for the scent -

Sustained thought, next, imbeds the mind
Sustainment held, is what is meant
Its aspect is continued pressure
Like the ringing of a bell

Its function is to occupy
Concurrent mental states, thereby
Thus manifested, then, from this
As anchoring the consciousness

Its conduct, then, is reticent
And doesn't tend to interfere
Like a bird with wings outspread
When, thus, it’s soaring in the air

To look at this another way
As when we go to wash a plate
Applied thought is the hand that grips
Sustained thought is the one that rubs -

The next group of formations in
The sense-constructive consciousness
Is that of bliss and happiness -
A gladness that replenishes

It has the aspect of endearing
And a function of refreshing
Thus pervading generally
The mind and body, gleefully

And manifested, then, from this
As jubilation, joy, and bliss
This group, when it is analysed
Can further into five divide -

The first is minor happiness
Which only raises body hairs
Then momentary happiness -
A flash of lightning in the night

The next is showering happiness
Which rolls on through like ocean waves
And then uplifting happiness
Can raise the body in the air

The last, pervading happiness
Completely permeates the body
Like a cavern, thus, invaded
By a massive inundation -

Moving on to energy -
The state of one who's vigorous -
Its aspect, thus, is said to be
Of driving and deploying, and

It functions to consolidate
And bring in line concurrent states
And manifested from this as
Stability of non-collapse

Its first preceding cause will be
An inner sense of urgency
And furthermore, this cause can be
The grounds for launching energy -

Then that which places consciousness
Commensurably upon the object
Or that thus collects the mind
Is known as concentration, and

Its aspect is non-wandering
Just like the sun, in focussing -
Of non-distraction it will be
Imbued with sky-like clarity

Its function, then, conglomerates
Like salts in water infiltrate
And manifested, then, from this
As concentrated steady peace

Its first preceding cause will be
Of joyful bliss and ecstasy
And should be seen as steadiness
Like candle flames, without a gust -

When faith, by essence, or by means
Is thus the act of having faith
Or if itself means holding faith
Then this is what is known as faith

Its aspect, then, is faith in teachings
That will manifest the Path
Or it can be instinctive trust
In manifesting happiness

Its function is to clarify
Like water-clearing jewellery -
Commencement is another one
Like setting out across a flood

Thus manifested, then, from this
As palpable non-fogginess
Or resolution, which can be
The urge to set all beings free

Its first preceding cause is, thus
An object from which faith can rise
Or Dharma-hearing - that which starts
The path towards stream-enterer -

Remembering, just by its means
Or even mere remembering
Or if itself remembers, thus
Then this is known as mindfulness

And so it has the aspect, then
Of ‘staying steady’ on an object
Anchoring and holding it
Not letting it just float away

Its function, then, is not forgetting
Manifested as protecting
Yet another it can be
Is facing an objective field

Its first preceding cause is, thus
Perception, focussed and intense
Or it can be analysis
Of body, breath, impermanence -

The next two in the ‘constant ones’
Within the forming aggregate
Are conscience, with a sense of duty
And the other one is shame

Conscience then, has principles
And is a term for modesty
While shame is thus distressed by this
And feels a deep anxiety

And conscience has an aspect that
Is sickened by all evil things
While shame then, on the other hand
Is frightened by those very things

So conscience, thus, will do no evil
In the mode of modesty
And likewise shame won’t do it either -
This, however, due to fear

Manifested from this as
Withdrawal due to modesty
Or due to dread of evil, so
These states are seen as guardians

Their first preceding causes are
Respect for self, and that for others -
Conscience shows respect for self
While shame will thus respect another -

By its means, not grasping for
Or even mere non-greediness
Or if itself then has no greed
Then this is labelled as non-greed

Its aspect is the mind's detachment
From desire for all it sees
Or non-adherence, it will have
Like water on a lotus leaf

Its function is not laying hold
Like liberated monks and nuns
Thus, manifested as the mode
Of treating nowhere as a home -

Then by its means, without aversion
So it's mere benevolence
Or if itself then has no hate
Then this is labelled as non-hate

It has an aspect that's devoid
Of savagery to anyone
Or non-opposing, it can be
Just like a calm and gentle friend

Its function is to shed annoyance
So that there is then no harm
Or it can clear away a fever
Like a cool and soothing balm

Thus manifested, then, from this
As non-opposing pleasantness
Just like the full moon shining down
That shares its light with everyone -

Then by its means, without delusion
Yet with mere lucidity
Or if itself has no illusion
This is labelled non-delusion

Thus, it has an aspect of
Discerning things and semblances
To comprehend phenomena
According to their essences

This penetration, therefore, is
Incisive, sure, and accurate
Just like a skilful arrow shot
That always penetrates its spot

It functions to illuminate
Objective fields, just like a lamp
And manifested from this, then
As patent non-bewilderment -

The next two in the ‘constant ones’
Within the forming aggregate
Are tranquillising of the body
And the consciousness as well

So thus it is tranquillity
Of body and of consciousness
Where ‘body’ means these aggregates -
The ‘felt’, ‘perception’ and ‘formations’

Both in aspect are the same
To quell disorder in the body
And the consciousness as well
And thereby nurture peacefulness

In function, too, they are the same
To crush disorder in the body
And the consciousness as well
And thereby nurture joyfulness

Thus manifested, then, from this
As calmness and indifference
And so their nearest causes are
The body and the consciousness

They should be seen as, thus, opposed
To poisons such as agitation
All of which cause restlessness
And hinder any meditation -

Next among the ‘constant ones’
Within the forming aggregate
Are light and quick states of the body
And the consciousness as well

So thus it is a buoyancy
Of body and of consciousness
Where ‘body’ means these aggregates -
The ‘felt’, ‘perception’ and ‘formations’

Both in aspect are the same
To conquer heaviness of body
And the consciousness as well
And thereby nurture pliancy

In function, too, they are the same -
Removing heaviness of body
And the consciousness as well
And cultivating suppleness

Thus manifested, then, from this
As vigour and non-sluggishness
And so their nearest causes are
The body and the consciousness

They should be seen as thus opposed
To dullness and rigidity
Which are the cause of lethargy
And other Dharma hindrances -

The next two in the ‘constant ones’
Within the forming aggregate
Are pliability of body
And the consciousness as well

So thus it is a limberness
Of body and of consciousness
Where ‘body’ means these aggregates -
The ‘felt’, ‘perception’ and ‘formations’

Both in aspect are the same
To conquer mulishness of body
And the consciousness as well
And thereby nurture limberness

In function, too, they are the same -
Removing mulishness of body
And the consciousness as well
And cultivating springiness

Thus manifested, then, from this
As non-resistance and concurrence
And their nearest causes are
The body and the consciousness

They should be seen as thus opposed
To states of pride and arrogance
Which are the cause of stiffening
And other Dharma hindrances -

The next two in the ‘constant ones’
Within the forming aggregate
Are tractability of body
And the consciousness as well

So thus it is compliancy
Of body and of consciousness
Where ‘body’ means these aggregates -
The ‘felt’, ‘perception’ and ‘formations’

Both in aspect are the same
To conquer stubbornness of body
And the consciousness as well
And thereby nurture wieldiness

In function, too, they are the same -
Removing stubbornness of body
And the consciousness as well
And cultivating willingness

They manifest, then, as success
In holding something as an object
And their nearest causes are
The body and the consciousness

They should be seen as bringing trust
In acts of worth and benefit
And thus opposing doggedness
And such remaining hindrances -

The next two in the ‘constant ones’
Within the forming aggregate
Are acquisitions of the body
And the consciousness as well

So thus it is proficiency
Of body and of consciousness
Where ‘body’ means these aggregates -
The ‘felt’, ‘perception’ and ‘formations’

Both in aspect are the same -
Subduing feebleness of body
And the consciousness as well
And cultivating healthiness

In function, too, they are the same -
Removing frailty of body
And the consciousness as well
And cultivating heartiness

Thus manifested, then, from this
As absence of debility
And so their nearest causes are
The body and the consciousness

They should be seen as thus opposed
To poisons such as faithlessness
Which are the cause of feebleness
And any allied hindrances -

The next two in the ‘constant ones’
Within the forming aggregate
Are rectitude within the body
And the consciousness as well

So thus it is integrity
Of body and of consciousness
Where ‘body’ means these aggregates -
The ‘felt’, ‘perception’ and ‘formations’

Both in aspect are the same -
Subduing artifice of body
And the consciousness as well
And cultivating truthfulness

In function, too, they are the same -
Removing falsity of body
And the consciousness as well
And cultivating faithfulness

Thus manifested, then, from this
As absence of mendacity
And so their nearest causes are
The body and the consciousness

They should be seen as thus opposed
To poisons such as artifice
Which are the cause of crookedness
And other allied hindrances -

The next group that we find within
The sense-constructive consciousness
Is that which is ‘conditioned’ by
Whatever other states abide

It starts with that which we call ‘zeal’
When for an object, there’s a need
And ends up with ‘neutrality’
Which looks on all things equally -

So by its means, without inaction
Having, thus, desire to act
Or if itself, an action needs
Then this is classified as ‘zeal’

Which therefore has an aspect of
Desiring impact on an object
Reaching out the ‘mental hand’
For objects thus to apprehend

So scanning for an object, then
On which to act is, thus, its function
Manifested from this as
The patent ‘wanting’ of an object -

If it has no indecision
And it then resolves to act
Or if itself decides to act
Then this is labelled ‘resolution’

Thus, it has an aspect of
Conviction in its active scope
Regarded as a boundary-post
That keeps the object well-composed

Its function then is not to grope
To gratify its selfishness
And manifested, then, from this
As evident decisiveness -

If, by its means, it does not roam
And has the mark of concentration
Or itself controls the object
This is labelled as ‘attention’

It will have an aspect of
Conducting objects in its scope
And thus it will coordinate
Associated mental states

It has the function, then, to yoke
Related states upon the object
So, from this, it’s understood
As confrontation with an object -

If it rises without bias
With regard to allied states
And has impartiality
Then it’s ‘precise neutrality’

Which has an aspect to convey
A sharp awareness evenly
Just like a trainer looking on
His wards, with equanimity

Its function, then, is to prevent
Deficiency, or great excess -
Another one it has is to
Inhibit partiality -

The last group that we find within
The sense-constructive consciousness
Is that which is ‘inconstant’ or
Contingent on ‘capriciousness’

‘Compassion’ is the first one here -
For others’ pain, it seeks relief
Then moving up to ‘abstinence’ -
In non-transgression manifest -

If, by its means, it is not cruel
And causes hearts, thus, to be moved
Or if it spreads through deep pervasion
Then it’s known as ‘great compassion’

Having, thus, an aspect of
Promotion of relief of pain
Its purpose is demolishing
The grief of others’ suffering

Its function, then, resides within
Not bearing others’ suffering
And from this, then, it’s known to be
Of absolute non-cruelty

Its nearest cause is witnessing
Distress in those upset by grief
Succeeding, thus, when cruelty dies
And failing when distress abides -

If those endowed with it are glad
Or in itself, it is thus glad
Or it’s the act of being glad
Then ‘gladness’ is the name it has

Its aspect, then, is joyfulness
When seeing others’ great success
Thus, seeking only to redress
The harmful ways of selfishness

It has an allied function of
Remaining, thus, unenvious
Appearing as removal of
Displeasure and indifference

Its first preceding cause will be
To see success, and other beings
Thriving, thus, when boredom dies
And not when revelries arise -

Now in this list there are three more
That make up the ‘inconstant ones’
Capricious in their incidence
Within the forming aggregate

Each one of them abstaining from
Misconduct that is physical
Misconduct of the verbal kind
And finally wrong livelihood

The same in aspect, are all three -
Of non-transgression, and good deeds
In each of their respective fields
And not employing devilry

In function, then, they equally
Retreat from their respective fields
And thus they manifest from this
As warding off delinquency

Their nearest causes, thus, will be
The source of special qualities
Like conscience, shame, and non-delusion
Lack of wishes, and so on -

So these are all the main formations
Known to have association
With the realm of sense that is
The sense-constructive consciousness -

The tainted consciousness is next
In this case, greed is its foundation
Grouped according to formation
Like constructive consciousness

So first, we have the ‘constant’ states
From ‘contact’ to ‘deluded views’
And then there are ‘conditioned’ states
From ‘zeal’ up to ‘attention,’ too

The first group, by association
Follows the ‘constructive’ line
And likewise the conditioned states -
Their single fault, the tainted mind

So, thus, there's contact and volition
Then applied thought - that which grips
Sustained thought, next - continued pressure
Then the gladness that refreshes

Energy then follows later
Striving to consolidate
And then we go to concentration
Non-distracted infiltration -

By its means, it has no scruples
Or just over-confidence
Or if itself is without scruples
Then it is a 'lack of conscience'

Non-aversion to misconduct
Is the aspect that it has
Or yet another it can be
Is total lack of modesty

It has a function to engage
In mischief without modesty
And manifested from this as
Embracing such activity

Its first preceding cause is, thus
A total lack of self-respect
For nuns embrace such evil when
They dwell in disrespect for self -

If by its means, there is no shame
Or if it's only guiltlessness
Or if itself is without shame
Then this is known as 'shamelessness'

As such, it has an aspect that
Is not in terror of misconduct
Or there's no anxiety
Regarding such activity

Its function, then, engages in
Such acts without anxiety
And manifested from this as
Embracing such activity

Its first preceding cause is, thus
A total disrespect for others -
People fuel such evil through
Audacity, and rudeness, too -

Then after this, if it is greedy
Or it's just the greediness
Or if itself is avarice
Then this is what is known as 'greed'

From this, it has an aspect that
Will grasp an object to itself
Just like some birdlime in a tree
That stops a bird from flying free

It's function then, is one of sticking
Just like meat, when it is cooking
Manifested as persistence
And not fading, just like lampblack

Thus, its first preceding cause
Is loving things that cause enslavement
Swelling with the flood of craving
Taking all to states of loss -

Then after this, if it's deluded
Or if it's a fantasy
Or if itself is misbelief
Then this is what is called 'delusion'

Thus, its aspect is of blindness
Grasping, though one cannot see -
Another thing that this is showing
Is the mind that is unknowing

So it functions to conceal
An object's individual essence -
Otherwise, then, it can be
A total failure to perceive

Thus manifested, then, from this
As absence of authentic theory
Or it also manifests
As darkness and blind ignorance

And so its nearest cause will be
Attention that's unjustified
And should be thus regarded as
The basis of the tainted mind -

If it surmises incorrectly
Or if it's misguided vision
Or itself is viewing wrongly
This is what is called 'wrong view'

Its aspect is established by
Interpreting what is unwise
Not seeing, thus, the truth of pain
Cessation, or from where it came

Its function, then, is to presume
That all is permanent, and true
Thus manifested from this, then
As incorrect interpreting

Its first preceding cause will be
A blind unwillingness to see
The Buddha, Dharma, and the Sangha
Thus, it is most blameworthy -

If, by its means, it's turbulent
Or if it's just the turbulence
Or if itself is in commotion
This is known as 'agitation'

With the aspect of unrest
Like water stirred up by the wind
Its function is unsteadiness
As when a flag whips in the wind

It manifests as turmoil, then
Like ash flung up by pelted stones
Its nearest cause is rash regard to
Restlessness within the mind

It should be, thus, considered as
Distraction of the consciousness
To be avoided at all costs
So that one's merit is not lost -

The next formations still remaining -
Resolution, zeal, attention
Should be known as we have stated
For constructive consciousness

It's only by the tainted mind
That they are differentiated -
These are, thus, the main formations
Tainted by association -

Next we have 'inconstant' states
Within the tainted consciousness
Of which then greed is its foundation
Grouped according to formation -

By its means, if it is stiffness
Leading to a state of torpor
Or itself the two together
This is 'torpor due to stiffness'

Thus, it means paralysis
Induced by lack of urgency
It also means a loss of vigour
Causing greater lethargy

In aspect stiffness, thus, will have
A lack of driving energy
Its function then, is to remove
One's vigour and one's energy

From this, then, it will manifest
As loss of force within oneself
And it is also the subsiding
Of the power that's residing -

Next in aspect, torpor has
An uncontrolled unwieldiness
Its function, then, will be to smother
Power, energy, and vigour

Manifested, then, from this
As indolence and laziness
The nearest cause of both is, thus
A blind enthralment to inertness -

By its means, if it's conceit
Or if it's just the state of pride
Or if itself is vanity
Then this will thus be known as 'pride'

In aspect then, it thus consists
Of self-inflating haughtiness
And in its function, it's comprised
Of loftiness and arrogance

Thus manifested, then, from this
As cockiness and boastfulness
Its nearest cause is heedless greed
And should be seen as foolishness -

The next in tainted consciousness
Which now has hatred as its base
Is very similar to 'greed'
Without wrong view, and also glee

And thus of course, instead of greed
It has formation then, of hate
And its inconstant states are three -
Of envy, avarice, and worry -

By its means then, if it hates
Or if it's just the state of rage
Or if itself is full of spite
Then this will thus be known as 'hate'

Its aspect is of savageness
Just like a snake that is incensed
And so its function is to spread
Just like a potent drop of venom

Yet another function is
As fuel for fire, like forest trees
Thus manifested, then, from this
As of a foe's fortuity

Its first preceding cause is, thus
The seething grounds for all annoyance
So it should be seen to be
Like fetid urine, mixed with venom -

By its means, if it is jealous
Or it's just the coveting
Or if itself consists of envy
Then as 'envy' it is known

Its aspect is the jealousy
Of progress gained by others, and
Its function is dissatisfaction
With that same prosperity

It manifests then, as abhorrence
At the sight of such success
Its nearest cause is, thus, the same
And should be seen as fettered chains -

If, by its means, it's avaricious
Or it's just the greediness
Or if itself is stinginess
Then this is known as 'avarice'

Its aspect is to hide success
That one retains, or will obtain
And so it functions not to bear
The thought that such things should be shared

It shows as that which, thus, decreases
Or it manifests as meanness
One's success, the nearest cause -
Regarded as a mental flaw -

When, by its means, depravity
Becomes the cause of villainy
Resulting in anxiety
Then this is what is known as 'worry' -

With the aspect, then, of grief
And also subsequent regret
Its function, therefore, is to mourn
For what has been, and not been, done

Thus, manifested as remorse
Its nearest cause will also be
What has, and what has not, been done
And should be known as slavery -

The next in tainted consciousness
Which has delusion as its base
Resembles, thus, the former case
Without absorption and the hate

And so the latter has become
The state that's called 'uncertainty'
And concentration is instead
'Unsteadiness of consciousness' -

Then of 'conditioned' states there are
Still 'agitation' and 'attention'
Without 'zeal' and 'resolution'
And 'inconstant' states are none -

'Unsteadiness of consciousness'
Is feeble concentration
Just according to occurrence
Mere presence for a moment

For in steadiness it's faulty
As it lacks decidedness
And it's without stability
Just like a flame whipped by a breeze -

Then if it has no wish to heal
Or if it has no certainty
Or if it's just contingency
Then this is called 'uncertainty'

It's aspect then, is one of doubt
And, thus, its function is to falter
Manifested, then, from this
As feeble indecisiveness

Its first preceding cause will be
A blind desire for worldly needs
And should be thus regarded as
The breeding ground of ignorance -

So this is how agglomeration
When it's bundled as formations
Can be seen to operate
Within the 'forming aggregate'

And this is one of many ways
The aggregates are broken down
To look at it another way
The Blessed One had this to say -

“Thus any ‘form’ without exception -
Past or present, or the future
And internal, or external
Gross or subtle, far or near

Inferior, superior
If in the mass, or totally
Will be materiality
And called the ‘aggregate of form’

And any ‘feeling’ whatsoever -
Past or present, or the future
And internal, or external
Gross or subtle, far or near

Inferior, superior
If in the mass, or totally
Is thus a sensitivity
That’s called the ‘feeling aggregate’

And all ‘perceptions’ whatsoever -
Past or present, or the future
And internal, or external
Gross or subtle, far or near

Inferior, superior
If in the mass, or totally
Are thus conceptuality
Called the ‘perception aggregate’

And all ‘formations’ whatsoever -
Past or present, or the future
And internal, or external
Gross or subtle, far or near

Inferior, superior
If in the mass, or totally
Are bundles of activity
And called the ‘forming aggregate’

And any ‘consciousness’ whatever -
Past or present, or the future
And internal, or external
Gross or subtle, far or near

Inferior, superior
If in the mass, or totally
Is cognisance that’s known to be
The ‘aggregate of consciousness’” [M] -

For thus, the Buddha so desired
That human beings be released
From blind assumption of a self
Among the five-fold aggregates

He taught the aggregate of form
For ease of cognisance, as first
Which is the gross, objective fields
Known as the eye, the ear, and so on

Then the feeling aggregate
Which senses matter from these fields
As something that’s desirable
Or something to repudiate

Perception is expounded next
To thus enable apprehension
Of the feeling aggregate
For “what we feel, we then perceive” [M]

And after that, there are formations
Which assemble as volitions
Through the agent of perception
Then transforming into action

Lastly, there is consciousness
Embedded in the aggregates
Of feelings, labels, and formations
Thus, it is in domination -

There is a distinction, then
Between the aggregate themselves
And those as objects of possessing -
When we say ‘the aggregates’

It's said without distinguishing
Yet those as 'objects of possessing'
Thus refers to those that are
Susceptible to the afflictions

And attracted to the clingings
As the Blessed One has said -
"Thus any 'form' without exception -
Past or present, or the future

And internal, or external
Gross or subtle, far or near
Is called the 'aggregate of form' -
And any 'feeling' whatsoever

All 'perceptions' whatsoever
All 'formations' whatsoever
Any 'consciousness' whatever -
These are then the aggregates -

And any 'form' without exception -
Past or present, or the future
And internal, or external
Gross or subtle, far or near

Susceptible to the afflictions
And attracted to the clingings
Is the aggregate of form
As object, therefore, of possessing

Any 'feeling' whatsoever
All 'perceptions' whatsoever
All 'formations' whatsoever
Any 'consciousness' whatever

Which are subject to afflictions
And attracted to the clingings -
These are all the aggregates
As objects, therefore, of possessing"[s] -

Even though the aggregates
Of feeling through to consciousness
Can all be free from the afflictions
Likewise in their subjugation

Not materiality
Which in both groups, then, it will be
Consisting, therefore, of afflictions
Thus, it differs from the rest

For feeling through to consciousness
Are only mentioned formerly
When they are free and not, therefore
When subject to our coveting

And so the meaning here is, therefore
Those which are the haunt of clinging
Are the aggregates of clinging
And yet all are aggregates -

But why are there five aggregates
And never neither less, nor more
That by the Buddha have been taught?
The answer here is grouped in three -

Because of similarity
Is thus the first, and secondly
Because there is a bound extent
For the assumption of the self, and

What associates the self
And finally, then, they include
All other sorts of aggregates
Like virtue, knowledge, and the truth -

All dharmas, then, are grouped together
Due to similarity
All that with form and matter is
What forms materiality

And feeling forms an aggregate
With fellow feelings likewise grouped
And so it follows with perception -
Likewise then, the other two

So thus it is that naturally
The aggregates fall into five
All dharmas grouped according to
Molesting, forming, and the like -

"Thus, all the people who assert
Eternity of world and self
Will do so by depending on
These aggregates or one of them" [s] -

And next there is the outer limit
For the inference of a self
Or what's applicable to self
Within the five-fold aggregates

For matter only just exists
Through clinging to materials
When thereupon we thus insist, that
"This is I, my self, and mine"

And feeling only just exists
Through clinging to sensations, then
When thereupon we thus insist, that
"This is I, my self, and mine"

Perception only just exists
Through clinging to our cognisance
When thereupon we thus insist, that
"This is I, my self, and mine"

Formations only just exist
Through clinging to volitions, then
When thereupon we thus insist, that
"This is I, my self, and mine"

And consciousness can just exist
Through clinging to mentality
When thereupon we thus insist, that
"This is I, my self, and mine"

And so there are five aggregates
Because there is an outer limit
For the inference of a self
Or what's applicable to self -

And last, the aggregates are five
Because the rest, from virtue on
Like joyfulness and concentration
Are contained within formations -

How, then, did the Blessed One
Depict the fivefold aggregates
Accordingly, as simile?
As illustrations, we have three -

So first, materiality
As object of our coveting
Is like a sick-room, as the basis
And the door and dwelling-place

Then feeling is the sickness
As it brings on the affliction
And perception, coming next
Is provocation of the sickness

Then formations, after that
Is fever, rising like a flame
Just as the store of tainted karma
Fills the body-mind with pain

And then the consciousness that clings
As object, thus, of coveting
Is like the patient, then, who is
Forever tangled up in feeling -

Matter of the body, then
Can also be just like a prison
And the site of punishment
Which is the aggregate of feeling

This is caused by the offence
Which thus results from false perception
Giving rise to the formations
Which are like the punisher

And last, there is the perpetrator -
Subject of the punishment
Who is, therefore, like consciousness
Afflicted by its constant feelings -

Back to matter, once again
Which can be likened to a plate
That bears some food, which are like feelings
Hidden by the sauce, perception

Owing to the apprehension
Of its beauty, taste, and more -
Formations then, are like the server
As they are a cause of feeling

Consciousness comes at the end
And is afflicted by these feelings
So it's like the eater, then
Provoked by feelings once again -

So this is how the aggregates
Should thus be known as simile
That, as example, Buddha viewed
Through sickness, punishment, and food

And furthermore, there are two ways
The aggregates are thus surveyed -
First, as a group, collectively
And second, individually

So as a group, the aggregates
As objects of our coveting
Just like a foe, should thus be seen
With sword raised in hostility

And as devourer, they should be
Regarded with trepidity -
Impermanent, and arduous
And selfless, formed, and murderous -

Now looking individually
At, first, materiality
All matter then, should thus be seen
As lumps of froth that can't be seized

And feelings, next, are effervescence
Disappearing in a second
Then perception's a mirage
Creating phantoms, near and far

Formations are a plantain tree
Because they have no core within
And consciousness, a magic trick
Because its aim is to deceive

Then back to matter, once again
Regarded now internally
It should be seen as foul and ugly
Full of pus, and blood, and grease

And feeling has intrinsic pain
And then the pain of constant change
And furthermore, conditioned pain
Embedded in the aggregates

Perception and formations, then
Are both regarded as not-self
And consciousness, impermanent
For thus it rises and descends -

In one who sees in these two ways
Both singly and collectively
Then good will come to be accomplished
In abandonment of wishes -

“Aggregates viewed in the form
Of enemies with wielded sword
For one who sees, they will not be
Creators of anxiety

The same applies when they’re viewed as
Devourer, formed, or arduous
And selfless, too, or murderous -
Such sisters are impervious”[s] -

Then looking individually
At, first, materiality
Regarded, thus, internally
A nun who sees it, then, as ugly

Fully comprehends it as
Consisting of gross stimulus
And sets about abandoning
False views of filth as purity

And crossing, thus, the raging flood
She’s loosed from bonds of sense desire -
Canker-free, and freed from greed
And sense-desire coveting -

Then one who knows the pain of feeling
Understands the nutriment
Consisting, thus, of contact, so
She sets about abandoning

False views of pain as pleasurable -
Thus, freed from bonds of being, then
She breaks the ties of ill will, too
And gives up precept-coveting -

Then one who thus perceives as selfless
Both perception and formations
Comprehends the stimulus
Comprising mental impetus

And sets about abandoning
False views of self in selflessness -
Traversing, then, the raging flood
And freed from fetters of false views

She breaks persistence in the view that
“This can only be the truth”
And through this, thereby, she discards
Belief in self, and coveting -

And one who sees impermanence
As, thus, the root of consciousness
Will comprehend the stimulus
That constitutes the consciousness

And sets about abandoning
False views of fixed impermanence
Traversing, then, the raging flood
And freed from bonds of ignorance

She breaks the ties with rules and vows
No longer shackled by afflictions -
Through this, thereby, she discards
Belief in views, and coveting -

“Such blessings, there will always be
When, thus, the aggregates are seen
As murderers and enemies -
So this, the wise should ever heed”

10 – The Bases and Elements

The aggregates are thus the first part
In the soil of understanding
Serving as the bed of knowledge
Fed by virtue in its roots

Along with harmony of mind
Which is enhanced through concentration -
And the second part is, then
The twelvefold sense-field ‘bases’ of

The six internal senses, and
And their corresponding objects
Acting as foundation for
Engendering of consciousness -

If, by its means, it relishes
Or if it is impinged upon
Molested by facade and colour
As an ‘eye’ it will be known

The meaning is, that it enjoys
A datum which is visible
Revealing what’s internal, then
So that it will be evident -

If, by its means, it cognises
All dharmas uttered and emitted
Or it’s just the act of hearing
As an ‘ear’ it will be known

The meaning is, that it enjoys
A datum which is audible
Revealing what’s internal, then
So that it will be evident -

If, by its agency, it smells
Or if by odours, it’s molested
Or it’s just the act of smelling
As a ‘nose’ it will be known

The meaning is, that it enjoys
A datum which is odorous
Revealing what’s internal, then
So that it will be evident -

If, by its process, it evokes
An appetite, the cause of life
Or if itself is evocation
As a ‘tongue’ it will be known

The meaning is, that it enjoys
A datum which is flavorous
Revealing what’s internal, then
So that it will be evident -

And if it is the emanation
Or it is the origin
Of abject states enslaved to cankers
As a ‘body’ it is known

The meaning is that it enjoys
A datum of tactility
Revealing what’s internal, then
So that it will be evident -

If, by its agency, it measures
Or it’s just the measuring
Or if itself is calculation
As a ‘mind’ it will be known

The meaning is that it enjoys
A datum which is cognisant
Revealing what’s internal, then
So that it will be evident

These six internal bases are, thus
Understood as ‘doors’ and ‘gates’
They’re not the organs in themselves
But are the elements within -

And then there are external bases
Or the outer sense domains
Which function through experience
Within the endless round of pain -

If, thus, it forms the visible
Or if itself is visible
Or activates the visible
Then it’s the ‘vision-data base’

The meaning is, it undergoes
An alteration in appearance
Showing what is running rife
Among the states of heart and mind -

If, by its means, it is emitted
And cognisable by ear
Or if itself is the emitting
As the ‘ear base’ it is known

The meaning is, it undergoes
A change in audibility
Revealing what is running rife
Among the states of heart and mind -

If, by its means then, it is smelt
Or it’s the act of being smelt
Or if itself is odorous
Then as the ‘odour base’ it’s known

The meaning is, it undergoes
An alteration in aroma
Showing what is running rife
Among the states of heart and mind -

If, by its means then, it is tasted
Or the act of being tasted
Or if itself is flavorous
Then as the ‘flavour base’ it’s known

The meaning is, it undergoes
An alteration, thus, in flavour
Showing what is running rife
Among the states of heart and mind -

If, by its means then, it is touched
Or it’s the act of being touched
Or if it’s tangibility
As ‘tactile-data base’ it’s known

The meaning is, it undergoes
Adjustment in tactility
Revealing what is running rife
Among the states of heart and mind -

And if it causes its own aspects
To be borne, or thus transferred
Whenever senses interact
As ‘mental-data base’ it’s known

The meaning is, it undergoes
Adjustment, then, in cognisance
Revealing what is running rife
Among the states of heart and mind -

The many states of consciousness
Belonging to these ‘gates’ and ‘objects’
Will be actuated, therefore
By contingency of function

Striving and endeavouring, thus
According to experience
And while the endless round of rebirths
Which is greatly actuated

Equally does not recede
So long the bases will lead on
Because they cause occurrence, and
Will run on what is actuated

All these states of consciousness
Along with their concomitants
Dwell in the eye, and all the rest
Contingent on them, as ‘abode’

And so the eye, and all the rest
Are also ‘store’ and ‘meeting place’
For sundry states of consciousness
Which use them as support and basis

And the eye and all the rest
Will be ‘locality of birth’
For sundry states of consciousness
Arising only in that place

And so the eye, and all the rest
Are thus their ‘reason,’ then, because
The sundry states of consciousness
Are absent when the bases are

Because of their dependency -
So in the sense already stated
‘It’s an eye, which is a base
And so it is the optic base’

And ‘they are visual-data, which
Is also thus a base, therein
So it’s the vision-data base’
And this continues up until -

‘They’re mental data, they’re a base
So they’re the mental-data base’ -
And each one should be known, therefore
As to the meaning thus expounded

In the way beginning as -
“The aspects of the eye are, thus
A primal readiness to grasp
The impact of the ocular

To bring one’s selfhood to the fore”
And so it goes for all the rest -
Yet if the eye and visual-data
And the nose and all the rest

Are mental data, thus, as well
Then why is it a ‘twelvefold base’
Instead of ‘mental-data base?’
It’s for defining door-cum-object

Of the sixfold consciousness
For only eye base is the door
And vision data, thus, the object
Of the consciousness comprised

Within the series of cognition
That contains eye-consciousness
And so it goes, then, for the others -
So they’re stated, thus, as twelve

For thus they’re classed, when so defined -
Among internal bases, then
The optic base is thus taught first
Because it is most obvious

And then the bases after that
Which have as their objective fields, then
That which is invisible -
The mind base, therefore, is taught last

Because it has as its resort
The other five objective fields
And each internal base is taught
Alongside its external one -

Thus, all formed bases do not have
A destination or a source -
There is no place from which they rise
And none they go to when they fall

Before they rise, they have no essence
When they fall, they are dissolved
Existing in dependence on
Conditions in the present, and so

Likewise, they should be regarded
As detached and uninvolved
For thus they have no interest in
Awakening the consciousness

Accordingly, it is decreed -
“Eye-consciousness, thus, comes to be
When eye and vision-data meet
And so it goes for all the others” -

Furthermore, internal bases
Should be seen as empty towns
Devoid of continuity
Enjoyment, and self-entity

And also the external bases
Should be seen as village raiders
Intervening through the senses
As they raid internal bases

For the Blessed One has said -
“The eye is thus harassed by both
Attractive and unpleasant objects
In the optic vision-field” [s] -

And, furthermore, internal bases
Are like snakes and birds and dogs
That gravitate to their resorts
Of water, space, and charnel grounds

Which emulate external bases -
This is then the exposition
Dealing with the twelvefold bases
Both external and internal -

Next, the senses are resolved
Into their own constituents
Which are, then, known as ‘elements’
Of which there are, thereby, eighteen

That is to say, eye element
And vision-data element
And eye-perception element
And then the ear element

The auditory element
And ear-perception element
Then followed by nose element
The aromatic element

And nose-perception element
And coming next, tongue element
Along with flavour element
And tongue-perception element

And then the body element
The tactile-data element
And body-concept element
And lastly, then, mind element

The mental-data element
And mind-perception element -
And each one should be known, therefore
As to the meaning thus expounded

In the way beginning as -
“If, by its means, it relishes
Or if it is impinged upon
Molested by facade and colour

As an ‘eye’ it will be known”
And then continued for the others -
And their meaning as a group
Is then the ‘sorting out’ of suffering

In the endless round of rebirths
With its great variety
According to their agency
For they ‘assort’ through living beings

As they are borne by living beings
As burdens are by burden bearers -
They’re a ‘sorting out’ of suffering
And of pain, because no power

Can be wielded over them -
By means of them as instruments
The suffering of the round of birth
Is always being ‘sorted out’

Thus ‘sorted’ into elements
Whereby this suffering is engendered
And distributed within them -
Though the self does not exist, then

With an individual essence
Not so these, because they cause
The bearing of a state’s own essence -
Just as all the parts of marble -

Malachite or cinnabar -
Are many-coloured ‘elements’
Then so too, thus, the elements
Of eye, and ear, and all the rest

Are also ‘many-coloured’ parts
Of knowledge and the knowable -
Or, just as the word ‘elements’
Is used for juices, blood, and bones

That make up the collection, then
Which as a group is labelled ‘carcass’
When distinguished by their aspects
‘Elements’ is used as well

For parts of personality
Which as a group is labelled as
The ‘pentad of the aggregates’
And thus distinguished by their aspects -

Element is thus a term
For that in which there is no soul
Accordingly, the Buddha taught -
“This person has six elements”[M] -

And so the exposition’s known, as
“It’s an eye, an element
So thus it’s the eye element, and
It’s an ear, an element

So thus it’s the ear element, and
It’s a nose, an element
So thus it’s the nose element, and
This continues, then, until

It is mind-consciousness, which is
An element, so thus it is
The element consisting of
Mind-consciousness, among the six” -

And each one should be known, therefore
As to the meaning thus expounded
In the way beginning as -
“The aspects of the eye are, thus

A primal readiness to grasp
The impact of the ocular
To bring one’s selfhood to the fore”
And so it goes for all the others -

As to ‘order of the teaching’
It’s set forth according to
Successive definitions of
The states of cause and fruit, therein

For thus the pair, eye element
And vision-data element, then
Are the cause, and from that, then
The element consisting of

Eye-consciousness, will be the fruit -
And so it is the same, therefore
With all the other elements
Continuing from ear to mind -

So why, then, are there just eighteen?
Where single essence is concerned
Then all existing elements
Are thus included in this grouping -

Light and beauty, for example
Being bound by vision-data
Are incorporated in
The vision-data element

And sense-desire is either in
The mental-data element
Or thus it is included in
The eighteen elements, and then

Renunciation, and ill-will
And cruelty, then, and non-ill-will
And pleasure, pain, and joy, and grief
And equanimity, and more

Are also thus included in
The mental-data element -
And earth and air and fire, then
Are thus incorporated in

The tactile-data element
While space and water are within
The mental-data element -
So these examples are supplied

To show existing elements
Are all included in eighteen
And also with eighteen, we can
Remove perception of a soul

Abiding, thus, in consciousness -
For so the Blessed One desired
Banishment of this perception
That he, therefore, explicated

Eighteen elements to show
The multiplicity of mind
As eye, and ear, and nose, and tongue
And mind and body elements

As well as its impermanence -
Which thus is due to mind's existence
In dependence on the sense
And object-data as conditions -

Furthermore, there are eighteen
To suit the aptitudes of beings
So the exposition is, then
Not too brief, nor over long -

"By methods terse and long, as needs
Due to the Dharma's brilliancy
He taught, so that from beings' hearts
If they can learn, the dark departs" -

Both eye and vision-data, then
Are thus the main conditions for
The eye-perception element
And similarly ear and sound

Are thus the main conditions for
The ear-perception element
And so it goes with all the rest
And there are more conditions, too -

"For eye-perception rises due to
Eye and vision-data, and
Then light, and thus attention too
And ear-perception rises due to

Ear and sound and aperture
And also, thus, attention too
And nose-perception rises due to
Nose, aroma, and then air

And also, thus, attention too
And tongue-perception rises due to
Tongue and flavour and then water
And attention, therefore, too

And body-concept rises due to
Tactile-data, body, earth
And also, thus, attention too
And mind-perception rises due to

Life-continued-mind, along with
Mental-data and attention" -
How, then, should they be regarded?
All formed elements should be

Regarded as secluded from
The past and future and so, therefore
Void of lastingness or beauty
Joy or self, and thus existing

In dependence on conditions -
So the eye is like a drum
And vision-data is the drumstick
Eye-perception is the sound

Or, likewise, it's a looking-glass
And vision-data is the face
And eye-perception is, therefore
The image of the face within -

Or once more, it's like sugarcane
And vision-data is the mill
And eye-perception is, therefore
The juice extracted from the mill

Or likewise, it's the kindling, therein
At the bottom of a fire -
Vision-data is the log
That has been placed upon the top

And eye-perception element
Is then regarded as the fire -
So too, in the cases of
The ear, the nose, and all the rest -

And as for the mind element
It should be seen as what precedes
And follows after consciousness
Of eye and ear, and all the rest -

And next, regarding that which is
The mental-data element
The aggregate of feeling has
The aspects of a dart or stake -

Perception and formations, then
Are like diseases, owing to
Connection with the dart of feeling
And perception is a fist

In which there's nothing grasped within
Producing pain through disappointment
And formations are the people
Throwing men into hot coals

Like throwing into rebirth-linking
Or they are like thieves pursued
As if they're chased by pains of birth -
Or like the seeds of poison-trees

That cause the continuity
Of all the fivefold aggregates
Engendering all kinds of harm -
Materiality, should be

Regarded as the razor-wheel [29]
Thus borne by those as punishment
For giving in to sense desire -
The element that is unformed

Is seen as deathless, peaceful, safe -
Mind-consciousness is then regarded
As a flighty forest monkey
Thus unable to stay still

Or as a feral horse, because
It's very difficult to tame
Or as a stick flung in the air
Because it falls in any place

Or as a dancer on a stage
Adopting masks of greed and hate -
"When, thus, the elements are seen
Then blessings there will always be"

11 – The Faculties and Truths

The elements are followed by
The twenty-two-fold faculties -
The eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue
The body and the mind, therein

The feminine, the masculine
The faculty of life, and then
The pain and pleasure of the body
Joy and sorrow of the mind

And equanimity, and then
There's faith and energy, as well
And mindfulness, and concentration
Understanding, followed by

'And-I-shall-know-what-is-unknown'
The final-knowledge faculty, and
Final-knower faculty -
And herein, as to eye and so on

Each one should be known, therefore
As to the meaning thus expounded
In the way beginning as -
"If, by its means, it relishes

Or if it is impinged upon
Molested by facade and colour
As an 'eye' it will be known"
And then continued for the rest

But as regards the final three
The first is thereby labelled as
'And-I-shall-know-what-is-unknown'
Because it rises at the start

In one who enters on the Way, as -
"I shall know the deathless state
The Dharma of the Noble Truths
Which are, thus, currently unknown" -

And also, then, because it has
The meaning, thus, of rulership -
The second is called final-knowledge
Since it's knowing finally

And also, then, because it has
The meaning, too, of rulership -
The third is called the final-knower
Since it rises in a nun

Who has destroyed afflictions, and
Possesses final knowledge, and
Completely knows the Noble Truths -
And also, then, because it has

The meaning, thus, of rulership -
So what, then is the meaning of
This rulership, or faculty
That each of them, thereby, possess?

The meaning of existing as
A ruler's mark, is faculty
And being taught, then, by a ruler
Means it is a faculty

And being witnessed by a ruler
Means it is a faculty
And being primed, then, by a ruler
Means it is a faculty

And being fostered by a ruler
Furthermore, is faculty -
The Blessed One is thus a ruler
Since he has the greatest lordship

And then karma is one, too -
Both tainted and constructive, thus -
For there is no one who has lordship
Over all the kinds of karma -

Faculties, thus formed by karma
Are the mark of karma, both
Constructive, and thus tainted, too
And since they are prepared by karma

They are then a ruler's mark
And have been primed, then, by a ruler -
And then since they've been disclosed
Revealed, and thus made evident

By he who is the Blessed One
They're faculties, thus, in the sense
Of being taught, then, by a ruler -
Also, thereby, in the sense

Of being witnessed by a ruler -
And since some of them were nurtured
By the Buddha, King of Sages
During his development

They're faculties, then, in the sense
Of being fostered by a ruler -
Furthermore, there is the sense
Of lordship as predominance

For thus predominance of eye
And ear and nose, and all the others
Is implied in the occurrence
Of the optic-consciousness

And aural, too, and all the others
Due to the dependence of
Such consciousness on faculty -
And each one should be known, therefore

As to the meaning thus expounded
In the way beginning as -
"The aspects of the eye are, thus
A primal readiness to grasp

The impact of the ocular
To bring one's selfhood to the fore"
And so it goes for all the others -
As to 'order of the teaching'

Herein, then, the noble stages
Are attained through understanding
Firstly, of internal states
So thus the faculties of eye

And ear and nose, and all the rest
Within the 'self,' are first described
And after that, the faculties
Of feminine and masculine

To show on what account that ‘self’
Is called a ‘woman’ or a ‘man’ -
The faculty of life is next
For even though the self is twofold

It’s existence is still bound up
In the faculty of life -
Then pain and pleasure of the body
Joy and sorrow of the mind

And equanimity are next
To make it known there’s no remission
Of oppression from these feelings
When the self has prime position

And to make it known, as well
That feeling’s unabated pain -
Then faith and energy are taught
With mindfulness and concentration

And of course, then, understanding
As a means to show the way
Because they must be all developed
For that pain to be surceased -

The faculty taught next is, then
‘And-I-shall-know-what-is-unknown’
To show the Way has potency
Since this is how this state will be

First manifested in oneself -
Then final-knowledge is taught next
Because it is the last fruition
Of the faculty before

And so it must be nurtured next -
The final-knower faculty
Is therefore the supreme reward
Which is taught last to make it known

That it’s attained by cultivation
Of the deepest understanding
And that when it is attained
Then nothing more needs to be done -

And after order, then there is
The function of the faculties -
The function of the eye will cause
Occurrence of eye-consciousness

According to its faculties
Of keenness, slowness, and so on
For as the Ancient Ones have said -
“The eye base is condition, then

As faculty condition, for
The optic-conscious element
And all associated states” [Pat] -
And so too in the cases of

The body, ear, tongue, and nose -
The faculty of mind, however
Has the function to subject
Conascent states to its command -

Conversely, on the other hand
The function of life faculty
Is to maintain conascent states -
The function of the feminine

And masculine is to allot
The modes of mark, and sign, and work
And ways of women, and of men -
Then those of pleasure, pain, and joy

And grief, control conascent states
Imparting grossness to those states
While that of equanimity
Is to impart the mode of calmness

And supreme neutrality -
The faculties of faith, and so on
Overcome their opposition
And bestow a confidence

Upon associated states -
The function of the faculty
‘And-I-shall-know-what-is-unknown’
Is to discard the threefold fetters -

Views of self, uncertainty
And grasping rules and rituals
And also, therein, to confront
All states with their abandonment -

The final-knowledge faculty
Then has the function to diminish
And discard, respectively
Desire, ill-will, and the rest

And also, therein, to subject
Conascent states to its command -
The final-knower faculty
Possesses, then, the function to

Discard endeavour in all functions
And conditions other states
By forcing them to face the Deathless -
After function, then there is

The planes of all the faculties -
The faculties of eye and ear
And nose and tongue and body, and
The feminine and masculine

And pleasure, pain, and sorrow, are
Thus only of the sense sphere, and
The faculties of mind and life
And equanimity, and then

The ones of faith and energy
And mindfulness and concentration
Are included in four planes -
The sense, the form, the formless spheres

And also the beyond-mundane -
For joy is just in three of these
And not within the formless sphere -
The last three are beyond-mundane -

“The end of suffering is attained
When faculties are thus restrained
Through understanding, they are seen
So this, the wise should ever heed” -

And next, there are the Noble Truths -
The first one is the truth of suffering
Then its origin, and ceasing
Then the noble path, thus leading

To cessation of all suffering -
As to class, each truth, therefore
Is analysed in blocks of four
According to their features, thus

As real, not false, not otherwise
For as the Blessed One has stated -
“Suffering’s meaning of oppressing
And its aim of being formed

Along with actions of inflaming
And its context ever-changing
These are, thus, its fourfold meanings
Real, not false, not otherwise -

With origin, there is the meaning
That it’s of accumulating
With its context as the source
Combined with that of subjugation

And the meaning of impeding
These are, thus, its fourfold meanings
Real, not false, not otherwise -
Cessation’s meaning of escape

Along with that of separateness
And then of being, thus, unformed
Combined with that of deathlessness
In these are, thus, its fourfold meanings

Real, not false, not otherwise -
The noble path, then, has the meaning
Of an outlet, where it’s leading
And the meaning of a cause

Along with purposes of seeing
And of great predominance
In these are, thus, its fourfold meanings
Real, not false, not otherwise” [Ps] -

For those who wish to apprehend
The meanings of the Noble Truths
In this there is the penetration
Thus required for realisation -

As to derivation, then
Of words and meaning for each truth
The Noble Truth of suffering is
Expressed in Pali, thus, as ‘dukkham’

Where the first word ‘du’ is met with
In the sense of abject vileness
And the next word ‘kham’ is met with
In the sense of emptiness

The first truth, then, is vile because
It is the haunt of many hazards
Empty, too, because devoid
Of beauty, lastingness, and pleasure -

Next, the truth of origin
In Pali, is ‘samudaya’
In which the word ‘sam’ thus denotes
Connection, concourse, and so on

Then ‘ud,’ therein, means rising up
As in ascending, and so on
And then ‘aya’ denotes a reason
As in causes and conditions

Thus, this truth is then the reason
For the rising of affliction
In connection with conditions
As the cause of all becoming -

Next, cessation’s understood
In Pali, as the term ‘nirodha’
Where the word ‘ni’ thus denotes
An absence, or a non-arising

‘Rodha’ then, denotes a prison
With the meaning of constraint
For thus the third truth, then, is void
Of all the destinies by rebirth

When cessation is achieved
The bonds of suffering are released
And so the prison of Samsara
Thus dissolves in non-arising -

And the last truth, then, in Pali
Is ‘nirodha gaminii patipada’ [30]
Or the pathway
That is leading to cessation

Where the second word denotes
A leading to, or making for
And ‘patipada’ then denotes
The means of getting to a goal

Because this truth leads to cessation
By confronting that cessation -
As the way to end all suffering
It’s the path to that cessation -

These are then the Noble Truths
That Noble Ones, thus, penetrate
So therefore they are Noble Truths
For in this world of deities

Ascetics, brahmans, queens and men
The Buddha is the Noble One
And that’s why they are Noble Truths -
For due to his correct perception

Of the Noble Truths, therefore
The Perfect One is called accomplished
And is the Enlightened One -
To be thus Noble is not false

And so it cannot be deceptive
So the Noble Truths are, therefore
Real, not false, not otherwise
And that’s why they are Noble Truths -

The truth of suffering has the aspect
Of discomfort and afflicting
Thus, its function is to burn
And manifested as occurrence

Then the truth of origin
Thus, has an aspect of producing
And a function to prevent
Constructive forms of interruption

So it rises from this, then
As hindering impediment -
And next, cessation's aspect is
A final absence, known as peace

Its function, then, is not to die
And manifested as the signless
Thus, secluded from the sign
Of any of the aggregates -

The noble path, then, has the aspect
Of an outlet, or escape
And thus a function to abandon
All defilements and afflictions

Manifested as emergence -
Furthermore, the Four Truths have
Respective aspects of occurrence
Then the making of occurrence

And then non-occurrence, and
The making of that non-occurrence -
Likewise, aspects of the formed
The craved, the unformed, and the seeing -

Of the truth, then, what's the meaning?
That then, which has been examined
With the eye of understanding
Not misleading, like illusions

Or deceptive, like mirages
Or ungraspable, like self -
The truth resides within the realm
Of noble knowledge that perceives

The actual state consisting of
Ordeal, production, peace, and outlet -
Of the truth, this is the meaning
Just as heat is, thus, intrinsic

To the quality of fire
And just as all things in the world
Succumb to birth, old age, and dying -
Real, not false, not otherwise -

“There is no pain, but is affliction
Naught that is, not pain afflicts
This certainty that it afflicts
Is what is reckoned here as truth

No other source of pain than craving
From that source comes only pain
This certainty in causing pain
Is why it is considered truth

There is no peace except Nirvana
And Nirvana is but peace
This certainty that it is peace
Is what is reckoned here as truth

No outlet other than the path
Nor fails the path to be the outlet
Thus, its status as the outlet
Makes it recognised as truth -

This real infallibility
Which is their true essential core
Is what the wise declare to be
Truth’s meaning, common to all four” -

Yet ‘truth’ itself has many meanings -
In such passages, then, as
“Let him speak truth and not be angry” [Dh]
It is known as verbal truth

And in those cases where it’s said
“Ascetics base themselves on truth”
It’s truth, then, of restraint from lying -
In such passages, then, as

“Why do they argue many truths
These clever talkers who hold forth?” [Sn]
It is, thereby, the truth as views -
And in those cases where it’s said

"The truth is one, there is no second" [Sn]
Then it's truth, as ultimate
As both Nirvana and the path -
And in those cases where it's stated

"Of the fourfold truths, therefore
How many of them are constructive?" [Ps]
Then it is the noble truth
And thus it is the proper truth -

But why are there four Noble Truths
As stated, neither less nor more?
The reason is there are no more
And none can be eliminated -

"Sisters, no-one here can say
That this is not the truth of suffering
Neither can it be discarded
And replaced by yet another

This is just not possible
And so it goes for all the others
Thus, there are no extra truths
And none can be eliminated" [S] -

Furthermore, the Blessed One
Announced occurrence with a cause
And likewise, too, with non-occurrence
Having, thus, a means thereto

So four is stated as their limit
Having only, thus, occurrence
And then also non-occurence
And for each there is the cause

And likewise, there are only four
For each must be respectively
Thus understood, and then abandoned
Realised, and then developed

Each one, too, respectively
Is thus the base of craving, then
There is the craving, then cessation
And the path to that cessation

Also, first there is reliance
Then delight in that reliance
Next, removal of reliance
Then the path to that removal -

This is how the truths should be
Confirmed as neither less nor more
When analysed respectively
As to their status, thus, as four -

And in which order are they taught?
The truth of suffering, thus, is first
Because of ease of comprehension
As it's gross and prevalent

And therefore common to all beings
Also, it's expounded first
To thus instill an urgency
In those caught in the joy of pain -

Its origin is then taught next
To introduce the cause of suffering
Also, thus, to make it known
That suffering neither comes from nothing

Nor is it originated
By an omnipresent being -
After that, cessation's taught
For with cessation of the cause

There is cessation of the source
And also, then, the fruit as well
And furthermore, cessation's taught
To thus instill a sense of comfort

By describing the escape
To those who, with great urgency
Are seeking to obtain release
From suffering, and its selfish cause -

And then the noble path is taught
To show the means of getting to
Cessation of the fruit and cause
And thus attainment of cessation -

This is thus the order, then
In which the Noble Truths are taught
For urgency and understanding
Motivation, and attainment -

How, then, are the truths expounded?
Thus, the Blessed One explained -
“For birth, old age, and death is suffering
Sorrow, lamentation, pain

Despair, and grief are also suffering
Also, meeting those you hate
And separation from your loved ones
And not getting what you want

In short, then, all the aggregates
Are suffering in the endless round -
And then there is the threefold craving
Which produces more becoming

Goaded by delight and avarice -
Craving, first, for sense desires
And then the craving for becoming
Then the need for non-becoming -

Next, Nirvana is that which
Is termination of that craving
Letting go, relinquishing
Cessation that’s remainderless

And finally, the Noble Truth
That leads us to the end of suffering
Is the noble eightfold path -
Right view, right thinking, speech, and action

Livelihood, right effort, and
Right mindfulness, and therein, thus
Perfection of right concentration -
In this path lies penetration” [Vbh] -

In the truth of suffering, then
The pain of birth has many meanings -
Those recalling past lives know
That in such cases, it’s becoming

Birth is also then the aspect
Of whatever, thus, is formed
And birth which comes from consciousness
That's first arisen in the womb

Is what is known as rebirth-linking -
When we say that "she was born"
Then this is known as parturition
And for one who's not rejected

Thus, according to their birth
In that case, then, it's known as clan
And when it is a Noble Birth
It's virtue of the Blessed One

So birth should thus be contemplated
As the manifesting, then
Of any aggregates appearing
In all beings when they're born -

Its aspect is the genesis
In any sphere of becoming
And it functions to consign to
Certain spheres of becoming

Manifested from this, as
A rising from a past becoming
Or it manifests, therein
As just the variedness of pain

But why is birth a suffering?
Because it is the basis, then
For many kinds of suffering -
Intrinsic suffering, that of change

And then the suffering of formations
And the suffering that's concealed
And that which is, thus, evident -
Each one direct, or indirect -

Intrinsic suffering is the essence
And the name, and painfulness
Of physical and mental feelings
Which arise in painfulness

And pleasant feelings which arise
Are sufferings of impermanence
Because they are a cause of pain
At any time they go through change

And feeling that's equanimous
Is suffering of formations, and
Dependent on the aggregates
And overwhelmed by rise and fall -

Such bodily and mental pain
As earache, toothache, and the fever
That is born of lust and hate
Is thus called hidden suffering, as

Through questions only, it's revealed
And thus it is not evident -
Or it can also be the sufferings
Of attachment, loss, and so on

As concealed in temporary pleasures
Such as wealth, or fame, or youth -
Afflictions, then, that are produced
Through torturing, and gross abuse

Is suffering that is evident
Because it can be known, therefore
Without the need of questioning
For thus the wounds are evident -

Of all the sufferings listed here
Intrinsic suffering is direct
And all the rest are indirect
Because they are the basis for

One kind of suffering or another -
Birth is suffering here, because
It is the basis for the suffering
In the states of loss, and also

That which fills the human world -
This suffering, therefore, has been classed
As that which is, thus, 'rooted in
Descent into the mother's womb'

And as such, then, it is described -
“When born inside the mother’s womb
A being, then, is not inside
A sapphire, rose, or snow-white lotus

Quite conversely, then, she is
Just like a worm in rotting fish
In cesspools, or in rotting dough
Born in the belly in a place

Between the stomach and the rectum
And the lining and the backbone
In a place that’s very cramped
And very dark, and thus pervaded

By the odours coming from
The bile, the blood, the excrement
The gorge, saliva, and so on -
A place, therefore, that’s very loathsome -

After rebirth in the womb
For ten months, then, she undergoes
Excessive suffering, cooked like pudding
In a steaming bag of heat

And when the mother quickly stumbles
Sits down, moves, or turns around
She must endure the added pain
Of being shoved, and tossed around

And also there’s the searing pain
As though she’s reborn in the cold hells
When her mother drinks cold water
Or she thinks that embers plunder

When she swallows something hotter
Yet again, there is the torture
When she eats acidic fodder
And it’s like she’s being pickled -

Then there is the racking torment
In the act of parturition
When she’s twisted upside-down
Flung through the passage from the womb

And lugged out through its narrow mouth -
A mammoth through a tiny hole -
As if with rocks she's in collision
Such the pain of parturition -

After she has, thus, been born
Her body, like a tender wound
Is bathed and washed and rubbed with cloths
Just like the pricks of needle points

Or slashes of a razor blade
And once she is outside the womb
A life of suffering there awaits -
Thus, birth is basis of all pain" -

And afterwards, there is the suffering
Rooted in self-violence
In those who mortify themselves
Or starve in anger, and so on -

And that arising in the person
Flogged and beaten, or imprisoned
Is the suffering that is rooted
In the violence of others -

Suffering is, thus, prevalent
In all the realms and all the states
And birth is where it all begins
As, thus, the Ancient Ones have said -

"Were no one born in hell again
The racking pain of scorching fires
And all the rest could not take place
Thus, Buddha said that birth is pain

And all the pain that beasts endure
Enslaved, and whipped, and killed for food
Their birth alone will pain procure
Birth as a beast, this pain ensures -

And ghosts endure varieties
Of hunger, thirst, heat, cold, and fear
Their birth ensures this misery
So birth's the source of suffering here -

The pain we feel upon emergence
After months inside the womb
Would not ensue without rebirth -
That birth is pain, there is no doubt

But why should I elaborate?
Can there exist a painful state
If birth did not, thus, happen first?
So therefore, the Enlightened One

When he expounded suffering, then
In his great wisdom, he took care
To first announce rebirth as pain -
The one condition needed there" -

And next, within the truth of suffering
Ageing, therefore, is twofold
Like birth, it also is an aspect
Of whatever, then, is formed

And as for continuity
Then ageing is the oldness of
The aggregates in one becoming
So it's known as 'brokenness'

And thus it has the aspect of
The ripening of aggregates
And after that, its function is
To form the path that leads to death

And then, from this, it's manifested
As the vanishing of youth
For it's a suffering of formations
As dependent on conditions

Ageing is the basis for
The bodily and mental pain
Arising from conditions like
The heaviness in all the limbs

And warping of the faculties
The disappearance of one's youth
The loss of strength and memory
Contempt from others, and so on -

“With leadenness in every limb
With every faculty declining
Vanishing of youthfulness
Intelligence and wit grown dim

With strength now disappearing fast
And growing unattractiveness
To spouse and all the family
With dotage coming on, thereby

What pain in body and in mind
A mortal must expect to find -
Since ageing all of this will bring
It is a well-named suffering” -

Then after ageing, there is death
Which also is twofold, once more
For once again, it’s of the formed
For death and ageing are, therefore

Included in the aggregates
And as for continuity
Then death is thus the severing of
The linkage of life faculties

That manifest in one becoming
Which, for reference, it is said -
“For mortals are in constant fear
That death is always ever near” [Sn] -

And death, as such, has many labels -
That with birth as its condition
Then there’s death by violence
And also death by natural causes

And there’s death from the exhaustion
Of the life span, and of merit -
With the aspect of a fall
And then a function to disjoin

And manifested from this, then
As absence from a destiny
In which there was a rebirth, so
Like birth, then, it is suffering -

“Without distinction, as they die
In pain, their minds are terrified
When people witness their foul deeds
And signs of next rebirths, they see

And though good people cannot bear
To part from all that they hold dear
Yet death, withal, will sever sinews
Joints and so on, and continue

To inflict a pain, which racks
All those whose vitals it attacks
And this suffices to explain
Why death, as suffering, is well-named” -

Regarding sorrow, next in line
It is a burning in the mind
In those affected by the loss
Of friends and loved ones, and thereof

Although its meaning is like grief
Its aspect is innate consuming
Thus, it has a function to
Consume the mind exhaustively

It’s manifested from this, then
As unremitting sorrowing
Intrinsic suffering, thus, it is
Of suffering, then, it is a basis -

“Sorrow is a poisoned dart
That penetrates a being’s heart
Like stabbing with a red-hot spear
And setting conflagration there

This state of mind brings future pain
Like death, and sickness, and old age
And from this, therefore, one may tell
Wherefore, as pain, it’s named as well” -

Then lamentation, after that
Is verbal clamour on the part
Of those affected by the loss
Of friends and loved ones, and thereof

It has an aspect, then, of wailing
And its function is proclaiming
Virtues, thus, and vices, too
For in their grief, they are confused

Thus manifested from this, then
As agitation and ferment
For it's a torment of formations
Thus, of suffering, it's a basis -

"One who's struck by sorrow's dart
With great commotion in her heart
Will cry out, clamour, and lament
And, thus, her suffering she augments

With pain that's borne of throat and lips
In great convulsion, hard to bear
For lamentation, too, is suffering
Thus, the Buddha has declared" -

Then pain that is corporeal
Contains the aspect of oppression
And a function that engenders
Grief and sorrow in the foolish

Manifested from this as
Affliction of the body, thus
It is intrinsic suffering, for
It does contain a mental suffering -

"Pain oppresses bodily
Thereby distressing mentally
While acting fundamentally -
Therefore, it's pain especially" -

Then grief itself is mental pain
That has oppression as its aspect
Due to this, its function is
To cause distress within the mind

And manifested from this as
Affliction of the mind, therefore
It is intrinsic suffering, for
Material suffering lies within

For people gripped by mental pain
Will tear their hair, weep, twist, and writhe
Abuse themselves, walk into fires
Suffer torments of all kinds -

“Though grief itself torments the mind
It also bears the corporal kind
And that is why this grief is pain
As those who have no grief explain” -

And then despair is much the same
As that which causes mental pain
In those afflicted by the loss
Of friends and loved ones, and thereof

It is a suffering of formations
And its aspect, inflammation
Thus resembles sorrow, therefore
From this, then, the thing that follows

Is its function to bemoan
Thus, manifested as dejection
So this pain comes from formations
Inflammation, and dejection -

“Such the pain, despair imparts
It burns the heart with fever’s flame
The body’s function it impairs
And so as pain it is well-named” -

So sorrow’s like the simmering
Of food cooked on a gentle fire
Lamentation’s like the boiling
Going when the fire’s raging

Then despair is that remaining
Once the boiling’s been exhausted -
After that, all it can do
Is cook until it’s dehydrated -

Next, there is association
With the unloved, as a suffering
Which is, thus, the meeting with
Both disliked beings, and formations

With an aspect of acquaintance
Or a bond with what's despised
Unloved and undesired, too
And so it causes mental suffering

Functioning to plague the mind
Its manifested, then, from this
As harmful states and situations
So for suffering, it's a basis -

"Merely seeing unloved things
Will thus invoke a mental suffering
Suffering, thus, of body, too
Through touching them, can then ensue

So therefore we should recognise
Since meeting the unloved, gives rise
To either of these kinds of pain
As suffering, then, it is well-named" -

And next, there is the separation
From the loved, then, as a suffering
Which is thus the parting from
Beloved beings and formations

With an aspect of estrangement
Or divorce from what's beloved
Desired and, thus, intimate
And so it causes mental pain

It functions to engender sorrow
Manifested, then, from this
As loss of beings, and of objects
So for suffering, it's a basis -

"Darts of sorrow wound the heart
When fools from wealth or kin must part
Which should be more than grounds enough
For counting the loved lost as suffering" -

Next, not getting what one wants
Is thus the grasping for that which
Is unobtainable, as in -
"I wish that we weren't subject to

Diseases, ageing, and demise
Or lamentation and despair”
But that cannot be simply gained
By wishing for it to be there -

Its aspect is the wanting of
An object unobtainable
And thus its function is to seek
That object, thus, regardlessly

It’s manifested from this, then
As devastating disappointment
Thwarting the results of wanting
That is why it’s known as suffering -

“Thus, when beings wish to gain
A goal they build their hopes upon
Which fails them, they are woebegone
With disappointment’s numbing pain

The cause is, thus, the hope to gain
An object they cannot obtain -
‘Not getting what one wants is pain’
The Conqueror has thus explained” -

Now birth and ageing, and so on
As mentioned in the list above
And others too, could not prevail
Were there no aggregates for clinging

Thus, the five-fold aggregates
Are taken in totality
As pain by Him, the Dharma’s King
Who taught the end of suffering

For birth and ageing, and so on
Oppress the aggregates of clinging
Just as fire uses fuel
Or shooting does a target, too

Or flies oppress a horse’s body
Reapers persecute a field
Or village raiders rob a village
Suffering, then, is generated

In the aggregates, as weeds
Or creepers that are on the ground
Or likewise, thus, as fruits and flowers
That are sprouting on the trees

So thus the five-fold aggregates
Have birth as their initial suffering
Ageing as the medial suffering
And then death's the final suffering -

Then there are the other sufferings
Such as sorrow, and so on
Consisting, thus, of inflammation
Contact, and of verbal clamour

Brooding, too, and augmentation
And the suffering of frustration -
When their aspects are, thus, seen
The aggregates are known as pain

So it's impossible to show
The varied multitude of suffering
Even over many aeons
As the Blessed One has said -

"In short, the aggregates of clinging
Only thus consist of suffering" -
In this way, he shows that suffering
Lies within the aggregates -

And how is it, thus, ever present?
In exactly the same way
That water's taste throughout the ocean
Can be found in just one drop -

And next, there is the truth, thereof
Which is the origin of suffering
Being thus the craving, then
That has becoming as its habit

Only yielding more becoming
So it means delight and greed
For these are, thus, the main concerns
When personality's perceived

And so this craving is threefold -
There's craving for the sense desires
Then the craving for becoming
And the need for non-becoming

All of which are, thus, surmised
Upon dependent co-arising -
Though this craving is threefold
It's comprehended nonetheless

As, thus, the Noble Truth, thereof
Known as the origin of suffering
Taken singly in the sense
Of causing, then, the truth of suffering -

Next, there is the Noble Truth
That is cessation of all suffering
Which is thus the ending of
The antecedent craving, then

Because cessation of all pain
Is when its origin is gone -
For only then will peace arise
And so it can't be otherwise -

"Just as a tree will grow again
While yet its root remains unharmed
So when there's craving yet instated
Pain is ever replicated" [Dh] -

This is thus the reason why
When Buddha taught the end of pain
He also therefore then described
Cessation of its origin

For Buddhas will, like lions, act
Who fight the hunter, not the arrow
Dealing with the root of suffering
Not its useless fruit of sorrow

Meanwhile, others act like dogs
Who fight the clod, and not the man
So thus they strike at suffering's fruit
Instead of going for the root

The ‘antecedent craving,’ then
Is that which brings forth more becoming
And which has been classed, therein
As ‘sensual craving,’ and so on

The path, then, is called ‘fading off’
For “when desires fade away
A sister is emancipated”[M] -
Thus, remainderless cessation

Rises from the fading off
And this is due, respective to
Complete eradication of
Innate inherent tendencies -

As to the meaning thus contained
Within this fading and cessation
All of them are synonyms
That mean the peace within Nirvana

For when craving fades away
Upon the reaching of Nirvana
It is called a ‘fading off’
And a ‘cessation of Samsara’

Thus in this, there comes to be
A total letting go of craving
Since there’s no dependence, here
Upon the cords of sense desires

So it’s known as ‘giving up’
‘Relinquishing,’ and ‘letting go’
And ‘not relying on’ desire
Or greed and hatred, and so on -

Its aspect, then, is one of peace
Its function, thus, is not to die
Or it can also be to comfort
Manifested as the signless

Which is therefore free of marks
Or manifested, therein, as
Perception non-diversified -
“For due to eye, and its viewed object

Consciousness of eye arises
Consonance of which is contact
This condition causes feeling
What one feels, that one perceives

What one perceives, one thinks about
And thinking, then, diversifies
And once she has diversified
A woman is beset with past

And future, thus, and present objects"[M] -
With Nirvana, though, it's gone
With neither absence, nor the presence
Of the future, past, and present

Thus, Nirvana's apprehended
By the means appropriate -
The way of virtue, concentration
And the deepest understanding -

Then the next truth that is given
Is the path that leads towards
Cessation of all suffering, then
And in this path, eight ways are taught

For when a meditator, thus
Embarks on knowing the Four Truths
Her eye of knowledge is fine-tuned
And with Nirvana in her sight

She cuts the latent tendency
To feed the round of ignorance
Which is, then, labelled as *Right View*
And has right seeing as its aspect

And a function to reveal
It's manifested from this, then
As thus the final abolition
Of the fog of ignorance -

Then, in possession of this view
She sets her mind upon Nirvana
And connected with that view
She disestablishes delusion

Which is labelled as *Right Thinking* -
With the mind upon Nirvana
And right guidance as its aspect
And a function to engender

One's absorption in that object
It is manifested, then
As thus the disestablishment
Of all diversifying thoughts -

And when she sees and thinks, thereby
Then her wrong speech begins to die
For thus the abstinence therein
Removes the verbal faults within

Right Speech is what it's labelled as
And so the aspect that it has
Is thus embracing kindred states
As loving and affectionate

Its function, thus, is to abstain
From verbal conduct causing pain
And manifested from this, then
As harmful speech abandonment -

And through her abstinence, thereby
From making living beings die
Engendered, also, by Right View
She thus removes wrong action, too

Right Action, then, is what it's called
And so the aspect that it holds
Is setting up what must be done -
For abstinence, which is Right Action

Has the setting up as essence
Thus, it functions to abstain
And manifested from this, as
Abandonment of harmful action -

When Right Speech, and also Action
Are together purified
Then through her abstinence, thereby
From livelihood that is not right

Engendered, therefore, by Right View
She thus removes her scheming, too -
Right Livelihood is what it's called
And so the aspect that it holds

Is one of cleansing, and its function
Therefore, is to bring about
A state of proper livelihood
And manifested from this, as

Abandoning wrong livelihood
And when she is established on
That plane of virtue called Right Speech
Right Action, and Right Livelihood

With vigour in conformity
Engendered, therefore, by Right View
She thus removes inertia, too -
Right Effort, then, is what it's called

And so the aspect that it holds
Is of exerting, and its function
Therefore, is the non-arousing
Of unprofitable things

Thus manifested from this, as
Abandoning erroneous effort -
When she thus exerts herself
And non-forgetfulness is nurtured

Cognate, therefore, with Right View
Wrong mindfulness is shaken, too -
Right Mindfulness is what it's called
And so the aspect that it holds

Is shaking off, and thus its function
Therefore, is to not forget
Thus manifested from this, as
Abandoning wrong mindfulness -

And when her mind is guarded, thus
By such surpassing mindfulness
The coalescence of her mind
Concurrent, therefore, with Right View

Removes wrong concentration, too -
Right Concentration's what it's called
And so the aspect that it holds
Is that of non-distraction, and

It has a function, thereby, to
Engage in perfect concentration
Manifested from this, as
Abandoning wrong concentration -

As to knowledge and its function
This description should be thus
Interpreted according to
The knowledge of the Noble Truths

For knowledge of these Truths is twofold
As ideas and penetration
Where the first is, thus, mundane
And manifested when cessation

And the path are only heard of -
Knowledge, then, as penetration -
Which is metaphysical -
Then has a function whereby, thus

It holds cessation as its object
So accordingly, it's said -
"For those who apprehend all suffering
Also apprehend its source

And also apprehend cessation
And the pathway to cessation"[s] -
This should therefore be repeated
For each truth, til comprehended -

When this knowledge is mundane
In overcoming all obsessions
That of suffering, thus, forestalls
The counterfactual view of self

It also thus anticipates
Mistaken concepts of the fruit
Like beauty, pleasure, permanence
And self, within the aggregates

Then knowledge of the origin
Averts a nihilistic view
And also thus anticipates
Mistaken arguments of cause

That try to make the world occur
Such as a mighty Overlord
Or from a Basic Principle
Or manifesting due to Nature -

Knowledge of cessation hinders
Concepts of eternity
And also thus anticipates
Mistaken concepts of cessation

Where release is said to happen
In a formless world, or heaven -
Knowledge of the path precludes
The ‘uselessness-of-action’ view

And also thus anticipates
Mistaken concepts of the means
In which the way of purity
Lies in devotion to indulgence

Both in pleasures of the senses
Or excessive self-abasement -
This is thus the exposition
As to knowing the Four Truths -

“While one is vague about the world
And of its origin and ceasing
And the means to its cessation
Then the truths will be unseen” -

To aid reflection on the path
For those who seek the higher truth
The Buddha taught us how to see
The Noble Truths as simile -

So firstly, then, the truth of suffering
Should be witnessed as a burden
That of origin is then
Appropriation of the burden

Thus, cessation is therefore
The dispossession of that burden
And the path to liberation
Is the means to dispossession -

Secondly, the truth of suffering
Should be seen as a disease
And that of origin is then
The provenance of that disease

And then cessation is, therefore
The antidote for the disease
And so the path to liberation
Is the chosen medication -

Thirdly, then, the truth of suffering
Should be looked on as a famine
That of origin is then
Considered, thus, to be a drought

And then cessation is, therefore
The world when it’s a time of plenty
So the path to liberation
Is a timely inundation -

Furthermore, the truth of suffering
Should be seen as enmity
And that of origin is then
The provenance of enmity

And so cessation is, therefore
Removal of that enmity
And thus the path to liberation
Is the means to extirpation -

Finally, the truth of suffering
Can be like a poison tree
And that of origin is then
The roots sustaining, thus, the tree

So then cessation is therefore
The cutting of the poisoned roots
And thus the path to liberation
Is the means to extrication -

This is how the exposition
Should be thus considered by
Sincere nuns who wish to see
The Noble Truths as simile -

And furthermore, then, one should see
The truths as empty, in the end
Because there is an absence of
A valid self who is the subject

And then also there's no doer
Nor someone to be extinguished -
Lastly, then, there is an absence
Of a person travelling -

"For there is pain, but none who suffers
Things are done, but there's no doer
People die, but no one's gone
And on the path, there is no goer -

Thus, the first pair's empty of
All beauty, pleasure, permanence
And self, and then the deathless state
Is only void of self, thereof

And finally, the path is void
Of pleasure, permanence and self -
Thus all is void, no less, no more
And such is voidness in these four

For three are of cessation, void
Cessation void, too, of these three
The cause of its effect is void
Thus of its cause, effect must be" -

And how, then, are they classified?
All suffering can be classed as one
As thus the aspect of occurrence
And then two, as name-and-form

And also three, as rebirth-process
Taking place, thereby, within
The sense, and form, and formless realms -
Then it's divided into four

According to the nutriments -
The physical, the tangible
Volitional, and consciousness
And then it's also of five kinds

According to the aggregates
As objects of our clinging, then -
And origin is also single
As the making of occurrence

And it's of two kinds, as well
As that which has false view or not
And then it's also of three kinds
As craving, thus, for sense desires

And the craving for becoming
And the need for non-becoming -
Then it's broken into four
As that which is, thereby, abandoned

By the fourfold noble paths [31]
And also it's of five kinds, as
Delight in all the aggregates
And furthermore it's of six kinds

According to the sixfold base
Of 'visual-data' craving, and then
'Sound' and 'smell', as well as 'flavour'
'Tactile-data,' and then also

'Mental-object' craving, thus -
Cessation, then, is of one kind
As being, thus, of the unformed
And indirectly, it is two

As with remainder, and without
And it is three, then, as the stilling
Of the three kinds of becoming -
Then it's broken into four

As that which is approachable
Upon the Fourfold Noble Paths
And also it's of five kinds, as
Subsiding of the five delights

And furthermore it's of six kinds
According to destruction of
The sixfold groups of craving, thus -
The path is of one kind, then, as

What should be nurtured and developed
And it's two when it is classed
As insight and serenity
And then it's also of three kinds

According to the aggregates
Of virtue, concentration, and
The understanding aggregate
For thus the Blessed One has said -

"These aggregates are not included
In the Noble Eightfold Path
And yet the Path's included by
The threefold aggregates, therein -

Right action, speech, and livelihood
Comprise the virtue aggregate
Right effort, mindfulness, and then
Right concentration, too, are in

The concentration aggregate -
And then right view, right thinking are
The understanding aggregate" [M 32] -
It's then divided into four

As thus the path of Stream-entry
And Once-return, and Non-return
And finally the Worthy One -
So this is how they're classified -

And this is how the exposition
Should be thus considered by
Sincere nuns who wish to view
The aspects of the Noble Truths -

"For when a nun is truly wise
And keeps the Four Truths in her mind
Her constant task will surely be
Thus, blessed with mighty potency"

12 – Dependent Origination

This exposition now turns to
Conditional origination [33]
And the states that are, therefore
Dependently originated

Herein, then, it is the states
Commencing, thus, with ignorance
That should be understood, then, as
Conditional origination

As the Blessed One has said -
“With ignorance, then, as condition
Thus formations, by volition
Follow, therefore, naturally

Formations as condition, then
Incite the rise of consciousness
And then with that as a condition
Thus arises name-and-form

With name-and-form, then, as condition
Then we have the sixfold base
And with those senses as condition
Contact, then, comes into play

And so with contact as condition
Then sensations will arise
And with sensations as condition
Thirst, or craving, will arise

And with this craving as condition
Clinging, then, comes into play
And with this clinging as condition
Then becoming will engage

And with becoming as condition
Birth will therefore reach fruition
And with birth, then, as condition
There is ageing, death, and sorrow

Lamentation, pain, despair -
And so there is arising of
A multitude of suffering
Dependent, thus, on all these things

Conditionally originated”[s] -
Secondly, it is the states
That start with ageing, death, and sorrow
That should be envisioned as

Dependently originated
As the Blessed One has said -
“And what then are the states that are
Dependently originated?

Ageing-death are transient
And also formed, and so they are
Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then

Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -
And birth is also transient
And also formed, and so it is

Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then
Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -

Becoming is impermanent
And also formed, and so it is
Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then

Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -
And clinging is impermanent
And also formed, and so it is

Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then
Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -

And craving is impermanent
And also formed, and so it is
Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then

Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -
And feeling is impermanent
And also formed, and so it is

Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then
Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -

And contact is impermanent
And also formed, and so it is
Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then

Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -
The sixfold base is transient
And also formed, and so it is

Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then
Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -

And name-and-form is transient
And also formed, and so it is
Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then

Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -
And consciousness is transient
And also formed, and so it is

Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then
Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -

Formations are impermanent
And also formed, and so they are
Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then

Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -
And ignorance is transient
And also formed, and so it is

Dependently originated
Subject to destruction, and then
Subject to a fall and fading -
Subject to cessation, too -

So these are, then, the states that are
Dependently originated" [s] -
Thus, the states that are conditions
Should be comprehended as

Conditional origination
And the states created as
Results of such conditions are
Dependently originated -

How should it be validated?
By the Blessed One's own word
For it's those very states, therein
That function as conditions, then

And also called 'reality'
Which have been, therefore, labelled as
Conditional origination
By the Blessed One himself

When teaching in the sutras on
Conditional origination
As accordingly, he said -
"With birth as a condition, sisters

There is ageing, death, and sorrow
Whether Buddhas rise or not
There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states

And their consistency, which is
Precise conditionality -
The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it

And teaches it, and makes it known
Establishes, exposes it
Expounding and explaining it
‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth is this

With birth as a condition, therefore
There is ageing, death, and sorrow’ -
With becoming as condition
Birth will therefore reach fruition

Whether Buddhas rise or not
There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states
And their consistency, which is

Precise conditionality -
The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it
And teaches it, and makes it known

Establishes, exposes it
Expounding and explaining it
‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth is this
That with becoming as condition

Birth will therefore reach fruition’ -
And with clinging as condition
Then becoming has fruition
Whether Buddhas rise or not

There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states
And their consistency, which is
Precise conditionality -

The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it
And teaches it, and makes it known
Establishes, exposes it

Expounding and explaining it
‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth, therefore, is
That with clinging as condition
Then becoming has fruition’ -

Then with craving as condition
Therefore, clinging has fruition
Whether Buddhas rise or not
There yet remains that element

Relatedness of states
And their consistency, which is
Precise conditionality -
The Perfect One discovers this

And penetrates, announces it
And teaches it, and makes it known
Establishes, exposes it
Expounding and explaining it

‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth, therefore, is
That with craving as condition
Clinging then will have fruition’ -
With sensations as condition

Therefore, craving has fruition
Whether Buddhas rise or not
There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states

And their consistency, which is
Precise conditionality -
The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it

And teaches it, and makes it known
Establishes, exposes it
Expounding and explaining it
‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth is this

That with sensations as condition
Therefore, craving has fruition’ -
And with contact as condition
Then sensations have fruition

Whether Buddhas rise or not
There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states
And their consistency, which is

Precise conditionality -
The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it
And teaches it, and makes it known

Establishes, exposes it
Expounding and explaining it
‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth, therefore, is
That with contact as condition

Then sensations have fruition’ -
With six senses as condition
Therefore, contact has fruition
Whether Buddhas rise or not

There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states
And their consistency, which is
Precise conditionality -

The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it
And teaches it, and makes it known
Establishes, exposes it

Expounding and explaining it
‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth, therefore, is
With six senses as condition
Contact then will have fruition’ -

Name-and-form, then, as condition
Mean six senses have fruition
Whether Buddhas rise or not
There yet remains that element

Relatedness of states
And their consistency, which is
Precise conditionality -
The Perfect One discovers this

And penetrates, announces it
And teaches it, and makes it known
Establishes, exposes it
Expounding and explaining it

‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth is this
With name-and-form, then, as condition
Then six senses have fruition’ -
Consciousness as a condition

Means that name-and-form arise
So whether Buddhas rise or not
There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states

And their consistency, which is
Precise conditionality -
The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it

And teaches it, and makes it known
Establishes, exposes it
Expounding and explaining it
‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth is this

With consciousness as a condition
Name-and-form will have fruition’ -
With formations as condition
Consciousness will have fruition

Whether Buddhas rise or not
There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states
And their consistency, which is

Precise conditionality -
The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it
And teaches it, and makes it known

Establishes, exposes it
Expounding and explaining it
‘And thus,’ he says, ‘the truth is this
That with formations as condition

Consciousness will have fruition’ -
Ignorance as a condition
Means formations have fruition
Whether Buddhas rise or not

There yet remains that element
Relatedness of states
And their consistency, which is
Precise conditionality -

The Perfect One discovers this
And penetrates, announces it
And teaches it, and makes it known
Establishes, exposes it

Expounding and explaining it
'And thus,' he says, 'the truth is this
With ignorance as a condition
Then formations have fruition' -

Thus it should be comprehended
That which is reality
Excluding unreality
Not otherness, and thus specific

In conditionality
Through explication is, therefore
Conditional origination"[s] -
Consequently, then, its aspect

Is composed of those conditions
Starting, thus, with ageing, death
And grief and lamentation, and
It has the function to continue

Processes of suffering
It's manifested from this, therefore
As the pathway of delusion
And because specific states

Arise from their prerequisites
No less nor more, is why it's called
'The truth,' 'reality,' or 'suchness' -
Thus, when these conditions meet

There is no non-production, therefore
Of the states they generate
And so it is, then, also labelled
'Barring unreality' -

And next it is because there is
No rising of specific states
Comprising other states' conditions
That it's called 'not otherness' -

And lastly it's because there is
A cause, or thus a total, therein
Of conditions for these states
Beginning, thus, with ageing-death

That they are then 'specific in
Precise conditionality' -
Conditional origination
Thus admits profundity

For as it also has been said -
"Within the first watch of the night
The Blessed One, thus, brought to mind
Conditional origination

From the start, and from the end [Vin]
Thus understanding feeling, thereby
With wrong view as its condition
And right view as its condition

With wrong thinking as condition
And right thinking as condition
With wrong speech as its condition
And right speech as its condition

With wrong action as condition
And right action as condition
With wrong livelihood as well
And thus right livelihood then, too

And with wrong effort as condition
And right effort as condition
With wrong mindfulness as well
And thus right mindfulness then, too

And concentration as condition
Wrong and right both, once again" [S] -
This structured vision of conditions
Is not easy to discern

And so it is indeed profound
So comprehension of these states
Should then be studied in two ways
In which they are themselves conditions

Or as a totality -
“In double form, this term relates
To a totality of state
From a conditionality

Among the actual states themselves
And thus, conditions for that sum
Through metaphor’s device have come
To bear the names, thus, as description

In the Buddha’s exposition” -
Therefore, the totality
Is one condition for that total
And the fruit is also called

Conditional origination
Just as when the word molasses
As condition, thus, for phlegm
Is therefore spoken of this way -

“Molasses is the same as phlegm”
Or just as when awakening
Which thus, for bliss, is one condition
Can be, then, referred to as

“Enlightenment is therefore bliss” [Dh] -
These causes, in totality
Beginning, then, with ignorance
As instigation of formations

Are then labelled as ‘dependent’
And thus understood to be
As ‘gone unto its counterpart’ [34]
In shared conditionality

Of factors, thus, in combination
In the sense that they produce
A common fruit, and furthermore
That none of which can be dispensed with

Thus, it's called a 'co-arising'
Since it causes states that rise
In mutual interlinking, then
Of unresolved contingency

To rise associatedly
And so it also has been said -
"This sum of causes, too, they call
Thus 'gone to counterpart,' so all

Is in that sense 'dependent,' then
And in that total, too, as stated
Fruits will rise, associated -
Therefore, as it's not alone

As 'co-arising,' it is known" -
And this conditionality
While acting thus, contingently
Arouses states, thus, equally -

Not piecemeal, or successively
And so by two words it is labelled
By the Greatest Sage, the Seer
So its meaning will conform -

'Dependent' and 'origination' -
Thus, the word 'dependent' shows
The combination of conditions
For when states are still occurring

They depend on this combining
So it shows they're not eternal
And it also thus denies
All doctrines of eternity

And all of those without a cause
And those that have fictitious causes
Or assert an Overlord
For what would be the purpose, then

Of this combining of conditions
If all things were thus eternal
Manifest without a cause
Or from a Basic Principle

Or from a mighty Overlord?
The word ‘origination,’ then
Explains arising of the states
For they can only thus occur

When their conditions interact
And, thus, it shows how to renounce
Annihilation of a soul
Or nihilism, and belief in

Inefficacy-of-action -
For when states are seen to rise
Repeatedly, as thus conditioned
By their predecessors, then

How can these doctrines be maintained?
And so, since any states produced
Don’t interrupt the cause and fruit
From combinations of conditions

Both words, when combined as thus
‘Dependent’ and ‘origination’
Represent the Middle Way
And this expression as a whole

Rejects false doctrines of causation -
“She who acts is she who reaps”
Or “while one acts, another reaps”
Are both extremes, and thus negated

By profound origination -
Furthermore, this Middle Way
Won’t misinterpret common speech
Yet neither will it override

Prevailing usage on the street
For even sages do not say -
“Please fetch for me Five Aggregates”
Or “Please bring Name-And-Form to me”

In reference to a man or woman -
‘Man’ and ‘woman’ are just concepts
Which depend on states that rise
According to combined conditions -

One who therefore understands
Conditional origination
Therefore cannot misconstrue
Such concepts as the ultimate

In meaning and reality -
When analysing beings, then
Instead of thus exemplifying -
“Wherein lies their permanence?

Is it materiality?
Or is it feeling?” and so on
A sister should not override
Prevailing usage in the world

And thus express a worldly meaning
Using words of common speech -
The first component, thus, denies
The false view of eternity

As well as no cause, and so on
And then the second contradicts
Annihilation, and the others -
Both together stop extremes

And show the way that’s in between -
And so in teaching, thereby, this
Conditional origination
As the Blessed One set forth -

“With ignorance as a condition
Then formations will arise” [s] -
Its meaning should be thus explained
By one who keeps within the Sangha

Doesn’t go against the teachers
Or promote her own opinions
Disagree with those of others
Or distort the Holy Sutras

Who agrees with the Vinaya
Looking up to those above her
Illustrating, then, the Dharma
Thus, according to its meaning

And reverting to that meaning
As described in many ways
For it is very difficult
To comment on, and clarify

Conditional origination -
Therefore, then, the only ones
Who have proficiency to do so
Must be experts on the texts

As in the past it has been said -
“The truth, a being, rebirth-linking
And the structure of conditions -
Four things that are hard to see

And likewise difficult to teach
And whilst I now begin to comment
On the structure of conditions
With no footing for support

I seem to founder in a sea -
However, many modes of teaching
Grace the Dispensation here
And still the Blessed Teacher’s way

Is handed down unbrokenly
So, thus, on both of these relying
I shall start my exposition
Of a meaning that’s profound -

So listen, please, attentively
For those who study this alertly
Reach the highest excellence
And when perfected, they escape

The vision of the King of Death” -
The Buddha’s teaching of what is
Dependently originated
Is fourfold - first, from the start

Then from the middle to the end
Then from the end, and finally
The middle to the start, thereof -
It’s like four different methods of

Uprooting creepers from the soil
For just as some will see the root first
And then cut it at the root
And after pulling it all out

They haul it off, so they can use it
So the Blessed One then teaches
On the deepest doctrine of
Conditional origination

From the start until the end -
“With ignorance as a condition
Then formations will be due”
Until “with birth as a condition

Death and ageing will ensue” [M] -
And some will see the middle first
And therefore cut it at the middle
Pulling out the upper part

And taking it away to use it
So the Blessed One then teaches
On the deepest doctrine of
Conditional origination

From the middle to the end -
“The gross delighting in sensation
Means that clinging will be due
And with this clinging as condition

Then becoming will ensue
And with becoming as condition
Birth will therefore reach fruition” [M] -
Other people, though, will see

The apex of the creeper first
So seizing it, they trace it down
To find the root and pull it out
And after pulling it all out

They haul it off, so they can use it
So the Blessed One then teaches
On the deepest doctrine of
Conditional origination

From the end down to the start -
“With birth as a condition, there is
Ageing, death, and lamentation
Thus it has been said by me

Yet, if it’s so, how are they here?”
To “Ignorance as a condition
Means formations will arise
And this was also said by me

Yet, if it’s so, how are they here?” [M]
Then others see the middle first
And, therefore, cut it in the middle
Tracing right down to the root

And taking it away to use it
So the Blessed One then teaches
On the deepest doctrine of
Conditional origination

From the middle to the start -
“And these four nutriments, o sisters
Tell me, then, what is their source?
And what is thus their origin?

And what has given birth to them?
By what have they been thus created?
Craving is their source, therein
And craving is their origin

And all of them are born from craving
Thus they are produced by craving” -
This is then continued to
“And these formations, then, o sisters

Tell me, then, what is their source?
And what is thus their origin?
And what has given birth to them?
By what have they been thus created?

Ignorance, then, is their source
And ignorance, their origin
So they are born from ignorance
And they’re from ignorance produced” [S] -

So this is how this truth is taught -
But why, then, does he teach like this?
Conditional origination
Is, thus, wholly beneficial

And the Buddha has himself
Acquired elegance in teaching
Through his Threefold Excellence
So firstly, thus, he has possession

Of the four great certainties -
His perfect wisdom, purity
His knowledge of impediments
And knowledge of emancipation -

Secondly, he has possession
Of the four discriminations -
That of meaning, that of Dharma
Language, too, and from this, then

He has courageous eloquence -
And thirdly, then, he has achieved
The four types of profundity
In fully analysing, thus

Conditional origination -
From the start, and from the end
And from the middle to the end
And from the middle to the start -

For starting, then, accordingly
From these four points, will lead us to
The penetration of the Way -
So this is then the reason why

The Buddha teaches many ways
For when he sees there is confusion
In perception of the causes
Making up the process of

Conditional origination
Then he teaches from the start
To demonstrate that it all works
According to its special laws

And also, thus, so he can show
That there's an order of arising -
And then when he sees a need
To show the laws of suffering

He starts his teaching from the end
Beginning thus with ageing, death
And sorrow, which he learned himself
Directly in his penetration -

Also, if he sees a need
To show the source of ignorance
He thus employs his teaching backwards
From the middle to the start

To show how cause and fruit extend
Both back into the past, and also
Forwards from the past as well -
And when he sees that there's a need

To show results of present causes
He employs his teaching forwards
From the middle to the end
To show how rebirth follows on

From stimuli in present causes -
Of these ways of presentation
This one should be understood
As going forward from the start

To show, thereby, that it all works
According to its special laws
And also, thus, to demonstrate
That there's an order of arising -

Why is ignorance then stated
As the start in all of this?
And how is it the causeless root
Of all arising in the world?

The answer is that it's not causeless
As a cause has been described -
"For when afflictions thus arise
Then ignorance arises, too" [M] -

Thus ignorance as a root cause
Was used by Buddha as a token
Serving as a starting point
Within his careful exposition

Of the cycle of becoming -
For the wheel of rebirth, thus
Has two beginnings in the round -
First ignorance, accordingly -

“No start of ignorance is taught
Which has no ignorance before
When ignorance just came to be
Yet, nonetheless, it is made known

That ignorance does have a cause”[A] -
And then there’s craving for becoming
As the next point where it starts -
“No start of craving is thus taught

Which has no craving there before
When craving, then, just came to be
Yet, nonetheless, it is made known
That craving has an express cause”[A] -

But why are those two things, therefore
The starting points of exposition
For the wheel of rebirth, then?
They’re major causes of the karma

Leading living beings to
The happy and unhappy fates -
For ignorance itself is, therefore
An outstanding cause of karma

Leading to unhappy fates
For in the grip of ignorance
Then men will murder living things
And thus perform all kinds of karma

Leading to unhappy fates
Yet craving for becoming is
A major cause of karma, then
That leads to happy destinies

For even in the grip of craving
Men abstain from slaughtering
And thus perform all kinds of karma
Leading to the happy fates

Which therefore gives them satisfaction
As they're free from inflammation
And it tempers and allays
The torments of unhappy fates -

Now, as regards these twofold states
As starting points in expositions
Of the process of becoming -
In some cases it is based

Exclusively on just one state -
"With ignorance as a condition
Thus, formations will arise
And from formations, consciousness" [s]

Or "craving, thereby, will increase
In one who revels in all things
That thus engender further clinging -
For with craving as condition

Clinging therefore will arise" [s] -
And in some cases it is based
On both the states, accordingly -
"This body then arises, thus

In fools bound by their ignorance
And caught up in the throes of craving
With its six internal bases
And the six external ones

Thus, forming a duality
From mind-materiality
So there is contact due to this
And then the fool feels pain and bliss" [s] -

So this is how the exposition
Should be known, then, 'as to teaching' -
Next, is 'as to meaning,' then
Of ignorance and all the rest -

It seeks out bodily misconduct
And good conduct it avoids
So therefore, it is ignorance -
It stops the knowing of the meaning

Of collected aggregates
Of actuating in the bases
Voidness in the elements
The faculties' predominance -

It stops the penetration, too
Of suffering, and of origin
Cessation, and the noble path
And thus dependent origin -

It drives all beings ever on
Throughout the endless round of rebirth
Of formations, a condition
Therefore, it is ignorance -

Its aspect, then, is of unknowing
With a function to confuse
And manifested as concealing
Cankers are its nearest cause -

From ignorance, there are formations
With an aspect, thus, of forming
And their function, therefore, is
Of rebirth-source accumulation

Manifested as volition
Ignorance, their nearest cause -
Combined with them is consciousness, then
With its aspects of awareness

Intellect, and cognisance
Its function is the precedence
Of name-and-form at rebirth-linking
And its cause is, thus, formations

Or the sense-base as an object -
And from this, two things arise
The first one is 'mentality' -
Or thus as 'name' it's also called -

Its aspect, then, is one of bending
And it has a function, then
To join with consciousness within
A state of mutuality

It's manifested from this, as
Inseparability, thus, of
Perception, feeling, and formations
Which have no distinct existence

Consciousness, its nearest cause -
And with mentality, there is
'Materiality,' or 'form' -
Its aspect is to be molested

And its function is dispersal
Since there's nothing, then, that is
Exactly holding it together -
Manifested, then, from this

As indeterminate of morals
Consciousness, its nearest cause -
From these, the sixfold base arises
With a view to actuate

And thus a function, then, to see
And hear and smell and taste, and so on
So it's manifested, therefore
As the basis and the door

With name-and-form it's nearest cause -
And from this base arises contact
With tactility its aspect
And a function of impingement

Manifested from this, as
Conjunction of the consciousness
Together with the twelvefold base -
The sixfold base, its nearest cause -

From contact rises feeling, with
Experiencing as its aspect
Due to this, it has a function
To exploit the stimulus

Contained in the objective field
It's manifested, then, from this
As pain and pleasure, and therefore
Its first preceding cause is contact -

Then from feeling rises craving
Due to habit, with an aspect
Of an inborn cause of suffering
And a function to delight

And manifested from this, as
Intense insatiability
With feeling as its nearest cause -
And then from craving, rises clinging

With its aspect, thus, of seizing
And a will to not release
And manifested, thereby, as
Intensive craving and wrong view

Its nearest cause, therefore, is craving -
Then, from clinging comes becoming
With its trait of being karma
Or the consequence of karma

And a will to make become
And also simply to become
It's manifested from this, as
Constructive, tainted, and inconstant

Clinging is its nearest cause -
Then from becoming there is birth
Its aspect is its genesis
In any region of becoming

So it functions as consignment
To an outlet of becoming
Manifested from this, as
Emerging from a past becoming

Or it thereby manifests
As just the variedness of pain
Its nearest cause, then, is becoming -
And from birth will thus arise

The fruit of suffering in the form
Of ageing, sorrow, death, and others
All of which have been discussed
Within the Noble Truths preceding -

Sorrow, grief and lamentation
Are expounded thus to show
The non-receding aspect of
The never-ending round of rebirth -

“Untaught fools, on being touched
By ageing, death, and painful feeling
Sorrow, grieve, and beat their breasts
And weep, and thus become distraught” [M] -

As long as these go on occurring
Just as long, does ignorance
And so the revolution of
The round of rebirth is renewed -

“With ignorance as their condition
Thus formations do arise
And from formations, consciousness” -
And so on, until ageing, death, and

Lamentation, and the others -
This is why the factors of
Conditional origination
Should be understood as twelve

By taking sorrow, grief, and so on
As one group with ageing-death
For they are all the fruit of suffering
Rising in the endless round -

“So herein, what is ignorance?
It is unknowing, thus, of suffering
And its origin, and then
Cessation, and the path thereto -

Unknowing, too, of aggregates
Of past, and then the future, and
Both past and future, too, and thus
Precise conditionality

And states which, therefore, have arisen
From conditionality" [Dhs] -
And when arisen thus, it keeps
The truth of suffering covered up

Preventing penetration of
The individual function and
Concordant aspect of that truth
And likewise, also, origin

Cessation, and the path, and thus
The fivefold aggregates, called 'past'
And those, then, which are called 'the future'
And together, 'past and future'

And 'conditionality'
And 'states,' therefrom, 'which have arisen'
All of which it keeps concealed
Preventing, thus, their penetration -

And from this will rise formations
Which are classified as six -
The first three are formations, thus
Of merit and demerit, and then

Of the imperturbable
And then there's of the body, and
Then verbal, and mentality -
And those of merit thus consist

Of positive volitions, such as
Virtue, giving, and the rest -
Formations of demerit, then
Consist of negative volitions

Such as killing living beings
Stealing and so on, and then
The imperturbable involves
Volitions in the formless realm

And as regards the other three, then
Bodily formation is
Corporeal volition, while
Formations that are verbal are

Volitions of the speech, and then
Mentality is of the mind -
This group is mentioned, thus, to show
That karma aggregation through

Formations, thus, of merit and
Demerit, and the formless, then
Take place within the karma doors
That make up body, speech, and mind

And herein, then, it might be asked -
“How is it proved that ignorance
Is thus the cause of these formations?”
By the fact that they exist

When ignorance itself exists -
When ignorance of suffering
Is unabandoned in a nun
She then believes the torment of

The round of rebirths to be pleasant
And embarks upon formations
Which create that very pain -
When ignorance of origin

Is unabandoned in a nun
She then embarks upon formations
In the servitude of craving
Thinking they’re the cause of pleasure

When they’re just the cause of pain -
When ignorance, then, of cessation
Is still present in a nun
She misperceives cessation as

Existing in a destiny -
When ignorance, then, of the path
Thus, leading to cessation is
Still unabandoned in a nun

She then believes it to consist
Of sacrifice and hardship, so
Her quest for immortality
Becomes another source of pain -

When ignorance of Noble Truths
Is unabandoned in a nun
She thereby cannot recognise
The fruit of merit, then, as suffering

Which is fraught with all the risks
Of birth, disease, old age, and death
So she embarks upon formations
With her body, speech and mind

In order to attain that pain -
Like one desiring godly youths
Who plunges from a seaside cliff
Not seeing how that fruit of merit

Reckoned as a lasting pleasure
Only causes her distress
Because of its impermanence -
She then produces that same merit

Which is a precise condition
For her endless suffering
Just like a moth that flies into
A flame that flickers in a lamp

Or like someone who licks a knife
So she can taste the honey, which is
Dripping on the sharp knife-edge -
And so, thereby, not seeing danger

In indulgence of desire
She produces more demerit
Thus, of body, voice and mind
Just like a child who plays with filth

Or like someone who swallows poison
Just because she wants to die -
And unaware of suffering of
Formations and of change, as well

Within the immaterial sphere
Because she sees them as eternal
She embarks upon formation
Thus, of formless mental merit

Just like those who lose their way
And to a goblin city, stray -
And so formations must exist
When ignorance itself exists -

“Not cognisant of ignorance
She then embarks upon formation
Thus, of merit, and demerit
And the imperturbable

But when delusion is abandoned
Clear vision will arise
And so she doesn’t even form
Formations, thus, of merit then” [s] -

“But how is this?” it may be asked
“Can there be other causes, too?
What is the Lord’s position here?
For firstly, if there’s only one

That means there’s just a single cause
And therefore there would be production
Of all things, then, all the time
And it would be a single state

But if there’s more, then the description
Of a single cause, as such -
‘From ignorance, there are formations’
Thus, is incorrectly stated” -

It is not a faulty statement
And this is the reason why -
“Not from a single cause arise
One fruit or many, nor reversed

‘Tis helpful, though, to utilise
One cause and fruit, symbolically” -
For here there is no singular
Or polymorphous fruit, therein

Arising from a single cause
Nor single fruits from many roots
Instead there’s only varied fruit
Arising from abundant causes -

For example, it is known
That triggered by the causes, thus
Of temperature and earth and seed
And moisture, varied fruits arise

Just like the shoot, which is its form
Then odour, flavour, and so on -
Yet one symbolic cause and fruit
As thus expounded in this way -

“With ignorance as a condition
Then formations will arise
And with formations as condition
Consciousness will thus arise”

Still has a meaning and a use -
For thus the Blessed One employs
One cause and fruit symbolically
To suit the varied needs of learners

And when it’s a basic factor
Or when it is obvious
Or in some cases it’s employed
Because it is not universal

Therefore, when the Buddha says
“With contact as condition, then
Sensations will thereby arise” [M]
He mentions just one cause and fruit

Because they are the basic factors -
Furthermore, it’s also said
“In ignorance, she thus embarks
Upon formation, then, of merit”

As it is most obvious -
And lastly, then, the Buddha says
“O sisters, any states that are
Thus, unconstructive and defiled

Have their foundation, thus, in the
Unwise attention of the blind” [S]
Because it is not universal -
Such attention that’s unwise

Does not prevail in all the states, thus
In the way that corporal basis
And an object do prevail -
So herein, then, it may be asked -

“But ignorance is culpable
And has entirely loathsome fruit
So how then, can it rightly be
The cause of merit and of peace?

For sugarcane does not grow from
The bitter seeds of Nimba trees” -
But why, then, should it not be right?
For in the world it is agreed

Both as opposed and unopposed
A state’s conditions may be found
And both as like and unlike, too -
That does not make it their *result*

It is established in the world
That states’ conditions may well be
Opposed or unopposed, as to
Their presence, essence, and so on

For thus a prior consciousness
Is not required to be present
For succeeding consciousness
And yet it is, still, a condition

Just as prior training, likewise
Is condition for the plying
In the trade of crafts, and more
Which thus take place successively -

And karma, too, is a condition
For materiality
Though not its actual character
As milk and so on are for curds

And light is also a condition
For the optic consciousness
Yet not its actual function, thus -
As sugar is for alcohol

And yet with eye-and-visual-data
While they're also a condition
Still, their presence is required
For the optic consciousness -

And so the first impulsion, then [35]
And thus the ones that follow after
Are conditions unopposed
As to their essence, and their function

Thus, conditions operate
Therefore, as like and unlike, too -
Materiality, itself
Like temperature and nutriment

Is therefore a condition for
Materiality, and thus
Contingent, then, upon itself -
As paddy seeds for paddy crops

And so with like and unlike, too -
Material can be condition
For the immaterial
And also, the reverse is true

So even though this ignorance
Has fruit that's undesirable
And totally condemnable in
Individual essence, yet it

Should be known as a condition
Thus opposed or unopposed
Or like or unlike, as to presence
Function, and the single essence, for

Formations, then, of merit
And of peace, therefore, as well -
For thus its state as a condition
Has already been recounted -

"When unknowing's unabandoned
In a nun who cannot see
The truth of suffering, and the rest
Then she believes the round of rebirth

To be pleasant, and embarks
Upon the three kinds of formations [36]
Which are thus conditions for
The very suffering she endures" -

For when a nun is ignorant
Of death, and rebirth, and the round
And thus the aspects of the formed
Dependently-arisen states

Then in her ignorance she forms
Formations of this triple kind
For ignorance itself is a
Condition for each one of them -

But how, then, does a nun confused
About these things, then bring about
This threefold hatching of formations?
First, because she is confused

Regarding death, and cannot grasp
The breaking-up of aggregates
Instead, she figures that it is
A lasting being that will die

And, therefore also, she's confused
About rebirth, and cannot grasp
That every birth is thus a case of
Manifesting aggregates

Instead, she thinks a lasting being
Is the one that manifests
Within the reborn body, and
So, therefore also, she's confused

About the round of rebirths, so
She cannot picture it as thus -
"The endless chain of aggregates
Of elements, of bases, too

That carries on unbrokenly
In what is called 'the round of births'" -
Instead, she thinks a lasting being
Transmigrates between the worlds

And, thus, confused about formations
She cannot then apprehend
Their valid and intrinsic aspects
Thinking that they are the self

Possessed by self, and thereby lasting
Pleasant, sweet, and beautiful
And so, confused about these states
Which are dependently-arisen

When formations then arise
She doesn't think that it is due
To ignorance and suffering
She figures that it is a self

That knows and does not know, and also
Acts and causes action, and
Appears in rebirth-linking, and
She figures that the atoms, or

An Overlord, and so on, therefore
Shape her body in the states that
Take place in the embryo
Endowing it with faculties

And once it has, thus, been endowed
It touches, senses, craves, and clings
Endeavours, and becomes anew
Or thus she thinks that "beings are

All shaped by mere coincidence
Or just by nature and their fate"[D] -
And blinded thus by ignorance
She's like someone who has no sight

And wanders long about the earth
Who, as she goes, must undergo
Great unpredictability
Who takes right paths, and then wrong paths

Through highs and lows, and different grounds
And so she forms formations, thus
Of merit and demerit, and
As well, the imperturbable -

“As one born blind, who gropes along
Without assistance from a guide
May sometimes choose a road that’s right
While yet at other times, it’s wrong

So while the foolish nun pursues
The round of births without a guide
Then, sometimes merit she may choose
Or thus demerit, in her plight

But when the truth she comes to know
And penetrates the aggregates
Then ignorance is put to flight
And she in peace, at last, may go” -

Formations, then, are thus the base
That represent conditions, therefore
From which consciousness arises
And this cognisance is known, then

As the sixfold consciousness
Of eye and ear, and all the rest -
But how is it, then, to be known
That consciousness, as thus expounded

Actually, then, has formations
As its imminent condition?
When there is no stored-up karma
There is no result of karma -

Consciousness results from karma
And therefore does not arise
When stored-up karma is not there
For many kinds of consciousness

Would then arise as causeless in
A multitude of beings, so
That’s why formations must be a
Condition for such consciousness

Then, does that mean the past continues
When a being transmigrates?
It’s only just a state of form
Or thus it’s immaterial

Arising from obtained conditions
That evolve a new becoming
So this state, then, has no soul
Nor is it, thus, a lasting being

It hasn't transferred from the past
And neither can it thus be seen
As manifested in this life
Without a cause that comes from that -

"A mere state that has conditions
Ushers in the next existence
Not migrating from the past
And yet, therefrom, there is a cause" -

When in the past becoming, then
A woman, thus, who cannot bear
The pain of her oncoming death
Her body slowly withering

Just like a palm leaf in the sun
Her faculties of senses, ceasing
While the faculties within
Of body, mind, and life remain on

In the heart-basis alone
Supported by that heart-basis
Then consciousness arises, thus
Contingent on some karma, which is

Classed as 'weighty' or 'habitual'
'Near to death,' or also as
'What was performed in previous rebirths' [37] -
Or it rises as contingent

On the 'sign of karma' or as
On the 'sign of destiny' -
The *sign of karma* is a ripening
Through accumulation, where

The karma is an object, and
Then *destiny's* a visual scene
From where the rebirth will take place -
And as it is occurring, thus

While craving-ignorance remain
It's indiscreetly pushed and flung
By craving and formations, thereby
Onto that objective field

The risk of which is thus concealed
Of course, by ignorance itself
And while it is, thus, pushed and flung
It must discard its prior support

Like those who swing across a river
Holding tight onto a rope
Which has been fastened to a tree
That sits upon the nearest bank -

The former state is thus called 'death'
Because it is a state of falling
And the latter, 'rebirth-linking'
As it links across the gap, which

Separates commencement of
The following becoming, yet
It should be understood, then, that
It hasn't come from prior becoming

Neither has it manifested
In the absence of the karma
Or formations, or the pushing
Or the signs, thus, as a cause -

"An echo, or its like, supplies
The figures here - connectedness
By continuity denies
Identity, and otherness" -

So let the illustration be
An echo and a light, as well
An image in a looking-glass
And also marks made by a seal

To show the fact this consciousness
Has not come from the prior becoming
Yet it rises due to causes
That derive, then, nonetheless

From past formations and becomings
Like an echo, and a light
The marks made by a seal, and then
An image in a looking-glass

Which all have, thus, respectively
A sound, a light-source, ink, and object
As their cause, and so arise
Without appearing, thus, elsewhere

As, likewise, does this consciousness -
For with a continuity
There's neither, thus, identity
Nor is there any otherness

For if there were identity
In streams of continuity
There wouldn't be, thus, any forming
Of the curd that comes from milk

And yet if there were otherness
In streams of continuity
It then would be impossible
For curd to be derived from milk

And so it would apply to all
Such causally arisen things
And then there would be no such thing
As worldly usage, in that case

And that is not desirable -
So neither absolute accord
Nor comprehensive otherness
Should be conjectured in this case

And here it might, therefore, be asked -
"If no migration manifests
Then, once the aggregates have ceased
The fruit could be another person's

Or the fruit of other karma
Since the karma that is, thereby
The condition for the fruit
Does not pass on to where the fruit is -

If there's no experiencer
Whose, then, is the fruit, therefrom?
And so this formulation seems
To be unsatisfactory" -

Now, when a fruit has thus arisen
In one continuity
It's neither of, nor from another
For identity itself

And otherness are both excluded -
As an illustration, then
The forming properties of seeds
Will thus establish meaning here

For once the forming processes
Of mango seeds are set afoot
And that specific fruit arises
In the chain of that seed's growth

Arising from the legacy
Embedded, thus, in its conditions
Then it's not from other seeds
And nor from other processes

That its conditions could emerge
And nor are other processes
Or seeds themselves, in any form
Transferred to where the fruit appears

So that is the analogy -
The meaning's also understood
Thus, from the fact that arts and crafts
And medicine, and other skills

Once learnt in youth, will reach fruition
Later in maturity -
"In continuity, the fruit
Is neither of, nor from, another -

Processes of seeds will suit
To show the purport of this matter" -
It was also asked, then, as to
"If there's no experiencer

Whose, then, is the fruit, therefrom?”
It’s due to the arising of
The fruit upon a tree, which is
One part of the phenomena

Known as a ‘tree,’ that it is said
“The tree, thus, fruits” - so likewise, then
It’s owing to the rising of
The fruit made up of pain and pleasure

Which is called ‘experience’
And one part of the aggregates
That are thus known as ‘deities’
Or ‘human beings,’ that we say -

“A deity or human being
Senses pain, along with pleasure” -
Therein, then, just like the tree
The fruit will rise, collectively -

‘Experiencer’s’ a convention
For arising of the fruit
They say “it fruits” as a convention
When the fruit on trees appears

There is, therefore, no need for a
Superfluous experiencer -
And so here it might be asked -
“But that would mean that these formations

Are conditions for fruition
Either when they are, thus, present
Or when they are not, therefore
So if it is when they are present

Their result must come about, then
Only when they, thus, occur
But if it is when they’re not present
They must bear fruit constantly

Before and after their occurrence” -
That’s not true, for these formations
Are conditions for their fruit
Because they have been carried out

And not from presence or non-presence -
“Due to profitable karma
Of the sense sphere thus performed
Or stored up, thereby, in the past

Resultant consciousness arises” -
Once formations are conditions
For their fruit, and nothing else
According to capacity

No more will they bear fruit, as such
For ripening has been thus completed -
As an illustration, then
The actions of a business agent

Will establish meaning here
For when an agent buys some goods
Or undertakes to get a loan
Then her performing the transaction

Is then, therefore, the condition
For completion of the business -
Not the presence or non-presence
Of the business deal itself

For once the business is completed
There’s no liability
So thus formations don’t bear fruit, then
Once the fruit has, thus, been given -

“One should of formations see
Just how they are conditions, then
For consciousness in birth and life
The three becomings, and so on” -

And consciousness is then known as
The base that represents conditions
From which name-and-form arises
And this name-and-form is twofold

As to how it should be known
And therefore understood, so firstly
‘By assay of mind and matter’ -
Through analysis it’s known

Where ‘mind’ is, thus, three aggregates -
Perception, feeling, and formations
Due to their resolve, therein
Of being bent onto the object -

‘Matter’ is the elements
And, thus, materiality
That is derived, by clinging, from
The fourfold elements, as in

The earth and water elements
And then the fire element
And then the element of air
As taught in body mindfulness -

The next analysis is called
‘Occurrence in becoming,’ whereby
Previous conditions, thus
Give rise to sense-sphere consciousness

For while it seems that sight, and sound
And thoughts, occur concurrently
Yet they arise at different moments
Thus depend on different bases

And encounter different objects
So there is no self, therefore
Coordinating these encounters -
That called ‘name’ will know the object

And then ‘form’ is simply known as
A materiality
Which does not know, or see, or feel -
Realities are, thus, appearing

Through the six doors constantly
And when right knowledge is developed
In this way, then it is known
That “name is name, and form is form” -

Awareness of this aspect of
Divergence in realities
Confirms the truth that all the dharmas
Are devoid of self, therein -

Next, name-and-form is then known as
The base which thereby instigates
The sixfold base, from its conditions -
‘Name’ is thus three aggregates

Perception, feeling and formations
‘Form’ should then be understood
As ‘elements and all the rest’ -
The bases, faculties, and so on -

How, then, is it to be known
That name-and-form is a condition
For the sixfold sense-sphere base?
Because the latter can exist, thus

Only when the former does -
For any given base, therefore
Has no existence, then, without
The latency of name-and-form -

“The eye is thus impermanent
Impermanence is suffering
And suffering is devoid of self
And what is not-self is not mine

And I am not the eye, therefore
And it is not, then, of myself -
So this is how the eye is, thus
With perfect insight, truly seen

And so it is for all the senses -
Seeing thus, a sister is
Repelled by eye, and ear, and so on
Thus repelled, there is no lust

And lusting not, she is set free -
‘For sights are, thus, impermanent
Impermanence is suffering
And suffering is devoid of self

And what is not-self is not mine
And I am not the sights, therefore
And they are not, then, of myself’ -
So this is how the sights are, thus

With perfect insight, truly seen
And so it is for all the senses -
Seeing thus, a sister is
Repelled by sight, and sound, and so on

Thus repelled, there is no lust
And lusting not, she is set free" -
Thus, name-and-form is a condition
For the sixfold sense-sphere base -

The sixfold base is then known as
The base that represents conditions
From which contact, thus, arises
And this contact is of six kinds

Split up into 'optic-touch'
And 'aural-touch,' and 'nasal-touch'
And 'sapid-touch,' and 'body-touch'
And then there is the 'mental-touch' [38]

And here it might, therefore, be asked -
"There's not one contact from all bases
Nor all contact from one base
Yet when the formula's expressed [39]

This 'sixfold base' is singular -
So why, therefore, is this the case?"
It's true that, thereby, one is not
Derived from all, nor all from one

But one is yet derived from many -
Eye-contact is thus derived
From eye-base, and then also from
The visual-object data base

And also from eye-consciousness
As well as mental-object base
Thus contact, which is of one kind
From many bases is derived -

"Though stated in the singular
We still perceive, in all such cases
That this contact, though just one
Is yet derived from several bases" -

Contact's understood, then, as
The base that represents conditions
From which feeling then arises
And this feeling is of six kinds

Split up as 'eye-contact-born'
'Ear-contact-born,' 'nose-contact-born'
'Tongue-contact-born,' and then there is
The 'contact-from-the-body-born'

And lastly, then 'mind-contact-born'
And each of them is named by door -
This feeling, then, depends on contact
So it can exist, thereby -

"Sensations are impermanent
And, owing to impermanence
Sensations have come into being -
How could they be permanent?

Cognising thus, a sister is
Repelled by eye-contact, and so on -
Thus repelled, there is no lust
And lusting not, she is set free" -

And feeling's understood, then, as
The base that represents conditions
From which craving thus arises
And this craving is of six kinds

Firstly, 'visual-data' craving
And then 'sound' and 'smell', and 'taste'
And 'tactile-data,' and then also
'Mental-object' craving, which are

Thus named from their objects, as
A son may take his father's name
And each of these six kinds of craving
Is then reckoned as threefold -

The craving, thus, for sense desires
And the craving for becoming
And then non-becoming, therefore
In three modes they can occur -

“Six cravings, for things visible
And all the rest, are treated here
And each of these, when it occurs
In one of three modes can appear” [Vbh] -

When visual-data craving, thus
With sense-desire, relishes
A visual object with the eye
It’s craving, then, for sense desires

But when that visual-data craving
Has, then, an eternal view
Assuming that same object to be
Lasting and eternal, then

It’s craving for becoming, as
Accompanied, therefore, by greed -
And when that visual-data craving
Has a nihilistic view

Assuming that same object, then
To break up, or to be destroyed
Then this is, thus, the one that’s called
The craving that’s for non-becoming

And the same, then, for the others -
Sound and smell and taste, and so on
Which amount to, thus, eighteen -
Then eighteen focussed on oneself

And then a further eighteen on
External data, and then both -
The data of one’s own and others
Adding up to thirty-six -

With thirty-six, then, in the past
And thirty-six, thus, in the future
And then also in the present
Altogether, then, this makes

One-hundred-and-eight kinds of craving
Thus reduced to six, and three -
So, taking pleasure in sensation
Out of selfish love, thereby

As when it rises through an object
Of the sixfold base, as such
Then beings, honour, thus, accord
To painters, cooks, musicians, and

Distillers, weavers, and perfumers
Who thus furnish visual data
Taste, and sound, and all the rest -
As with affection for a child

They thus reward the child's nurse
Once having, thus, enjoyed the child
So these three cravings have sensations
As their causes and condition -

"Those in pain, for pleasure long
And finding pleasure, long for more
The peace of equanimity
Is counted pleasure, too, therefore

The Greatest Sage announced the law
'With feeling as condition, craving'
Since three feelings,[40] thus, can be
Conditions for all kinds of craving -

Though it's a condition, thus
If yet there are no tendencies
No craving can arise, and so
From this the perfect saint is free" -

And craving, thus, is then known as
The base that represents conditions
From which clinging thus arises
And this clinging is fourfold

As clinging on to sense-desire
And the clinging to false views
And grasping onto rules-and-vows
As well as doctrines of the self

So sense-desire clinging, then
Is, therefore, 'craving that is firm'
For it's the lust for sense desires
And the greed for sense desires

And delight in sense desires
And the craving for desires
It's the sense-desire fever
And committal to desire

Thus, it's sense-desire clinging -
It is craving which has hardened
In its firmness, therefore, through
The influence of prior craving -

"Craving's the aspiring to
An object not yet reached, just like
A thief's hand groping in the dark
And clinging is the grasping of

An object one has reached, just like
The thief then grasping his objective"[D] -
Both oppose serenity
And deep contentment, so therefore

They are the provenance of suffering
Due to seeking and protection -
False-view clinging, then, is therefore
Based on unsound views, as in

"Eternal are the world and self"
Or "there is no-one virtuous
Who has true knowledge of the Dharma" -
Rules-and-vows adherence, then

Is thus the clinging to the view
That purifying of the self
Will only come through ritual -
And then the clinging to self-doctrine

Is the unsubstantial view of
Individuality
In which the foolish woman sees
Materiality as self -

So clinging's understood, then, as
The base that represents conditions
Which becoming rises from -
"For it becomes, so it's becoming"

And divided into two -
As karma-process as becoming
And as rebirth-process, also
For as rebirth is becoming

Likewise karma is, then, too -
As Buddhas' rising causes bliss
It should be therefore understood
That karma is 'becoming,' then

In terms of fruit, since it's a cause -
For karma-process is volition
And the states of coveting
Associated with volition

Are considered karma, too
Thus, karma-process as becoming
Is formation, then, of merit
And formation of demerit

And formation of the formless
All of which is karma-process
If the karma leads to being -
Rebirth-process as becoming

Is the aggregates, which are
Thus generated, then, by karma -
That with sense-desire clinging
As conditions thus performed

And generated as becoming
Is the outcome that is known as
'Karma-process as becoming'
And the aggregates which are

Thus generated by that are, then
'Rebirth-process as becoming' -
And it is the same within
The form and formless realms as well -

For thus, in all, without exception
Clinging is a root condition
Any kind of clinging, therefore
Is a cause for all becoming -

“Common people are like crackpots
Who, without considering whether
Something’s right, or it is not
Will, thus, aspire by means of clinging

Or becoming - lost in craving -
And perform all kinds of karma” -
For example, someone thinks, then
In accordance with false views

That sense desires can be fulfilled
Within the human world, among
Great families of warriors
And other mighty beings, too

And in the six divine worlds of
The sense-desire sphere, as well
So thus misled by listening to
Such unsound doctrines and, therefore

Believing that such karma will, then
Satisfy her sense desires
She then engages in misconduct
Via sense-desire clinging

Grasping onto sense desires
And protecting those acquired
Thus, fulfilling her misconduct
And reborn in states of loss -

The cause of rebirth in those states is
Karma-process as becoming
And the aggregates, which are
Thus generated by that are, then

Rebirth-process as becoming -
Yet another, though, whose knowledge
Thus, intensified by Dharma
Thinks that “by this kind of karma

Sense desires will be fulfilled”
And thus, through sense-desire clinging
She engages in good conduct
And fulfilling her good conduct

As a deity, she's born
Or as a human being, thus
The cause of rebirth in those states is
Karma-process as becoming

And the aggregates, which are
Thus generated by that are, then
Rebirth-process as becoming -
Yet another, thus, conjectures

Sense desires are perfected
In the form and formless classes
Of becoming as a rebirth
So, through sense-desire clinging

She produces those attainments
And by virtue, then, of those
Is born in form or formless worlds -
The cause of rebirth in those states is

Karma-process as becoming
And the aggregates, which are
Thus generated by that are, then
Rebirth-process as becoming -

Yet another clings onto
The nihilistic view, and thinks -
"This self will be entirely cut off
When, one day, it's severed from

The states of fortune in the sense sphere
Or the form or formless classes
Of becoming" and produces
Karma, thereby, to achieve that -

Thus, the rebirth in those states is
Karma-process as becoming
And the aggregates, which have been
Generated by that are, then

Rebirth-process as becoming -
Yet another clings onto
Self-centred theory, and conjectures
That "this self will be most blissful

Or will, thus, be free from fever
When, one day, it's reborn in
The states of fortune in the sense sphere
Or the form or formless classes

Of becoming" and produces
Karma, thereby, to achieve that -
Thus, the rebirth in those states is
Karma-process as becoming

And the aggregates, which are
Thus generated by that are, then
Rebirth-process as becoming -
Yet another then believes

Her rules-and-vows-adherence, thus
Will lead her onto perfect bliss
In states of fortune in the sense sphere
Or the form or formless classes

Of becoming, and produces
Karma, thereby, to achieve that -
Thus, the rebirth in those states is
Karma-process as becoming

And the aggregates, which are
Thus generated by that are, then
Rebirth-process as becoming -
Such are causes for becoming -

And becoming's then known as
The base that represents conditions
From which birth arises, then
As karma-process as becoming

For it's thus the root of birth
And therefore it cannot be known
As rebirth-process as becoming
Which is only the result -

So herein, then, it may be asked -
"But how, therefore, can it be proved
Becoming is a cause of birth?"
Because of the observable

Existing differences between
Inferiority and, thus
Superiority, as well
Among all beings when they're born

In spite of viewed equality
Among external circumstances -
Father, mother, seed, and blood
And nutriment, and others, too -

The gaps that, thus, exist between
Inferiority and, thus
Superiority, as well
Among all beings when they're born

Are also further verified
Then, in the instances of twins -
This fact is also, thus, not causeless
Since it is not always present

Consequently, it has only
Karma-process as becoming
As its root condition, then
For karma is the cause of gaps

That do exist, therefore, between
Inferiority and, thus
Superiority, as well
Among all beings when they're born -

And so when birth does not take place
Then ageing, death, and lamentation
And the states that start with sorrow
Do not come about, but then

When birth takes place, they do arise -
So therefore birth is a condition
Thus, for ageing and demise
And states of sorrow, and so on -

"Thus of becoming, we surmise
Just how it is condition, then
For birth, and ageing, and demise
And all the states bound up with grief"

13 – The Wheel of Becoming

Now at the end, the states of sorrow
And so on, are here announced
So consequently, ignorance
Which was expounded at the start

Of this, 'Becoming's Wheel,' as thus -
"With ignorance, then, as condition
Thus, formations will arise"
Is instigated here, by grief -

"Becoming's Wheel has no beginning
Never stopping, ever spinning
Yet of selfhood, it is bare
No maker, or sustainer there" -

But how is it that ignorance
is instigated, thus, by grief?
Now, grief and sorrow and despair
Are intertwined with ignorance

And when they are, therefore, established
Ignorance will be established -
"When afflictions, thus, arise
Then ignorance will also rise" [M] -

And with arising of afflictions
Grief and sorrow and despair
Will also, thus, come into being -
How, then, does this happen, so?

The grief of severance from desires
As an object of the senses
Thus, itself, arises from
The canker that is sense desire -

"When chasing after lust and longing
Yet desire still eludes her
Then she suffers, as if skewered
By an arrow through the heart [Sn] -

For sorrow, therefore, will arise
Assuredly from sense desires" [Dh] -
And all these, therefore, come about
When cankers of wrong views arise -

“In one who, therefore, has the view
‘I am materiality’ or
‘My materiality,’ then
With the change and transformation

Of materiality
Arises sorrow and despair
And lamentation, pain, and grief” [s] -
And as with cankers of wrong views

Then so too with becoming, then -
“When gods of beauty and long lives
Then listen to the perfect Dharma
Or observe the signs of death

And dissolution coming near
Then they will feel a sense of fear
And thus a sense of urgency” [s] -
For when afflictions are established

Ignorance is also there
Because it therefore must be present
In the presence of conditions
For afflictions are conditions

And the cause of ignorance
And, thus, when all of this is known -
“With ignorance as a condition
Then formations will arise

And with formations as condition
Consciousness will then arise” -
There is no end to the succession
Of the cause with fruit, this way

And thereupon, Becoming’s Wheel
With all its twelve dependent factors
Thus, enmeshed and intertwined
In links of cause and of effect

Is thus established, therefore, as
“Not having any known beginning” -
If that’s so, are not the words
“With ignorance as a condition

Then there are, therefore, formations”
As an exposition of
A base beginning, contradicted?
This is not an exposition

Of a simple base beginning
It is of a basic state
For ignorance is thus the state
Of all the manifesting rounds

Of karma, poisons, and results
For when she seizes ignorance
A fool gets caught up in these rounds
As when a snake’s head, thus, is seized

One’s arm gets caught up in its coils
But then, when ignorance is severed
She attains her liberation -
As the arm is liberated

When the snake’s decapitated -
This is, thus, the basic state
Wherein there’s bondage if you grasp
And freedom, thereby, if you don’t

So thus it’s not an exposition
Of a simple first position -
From occurrence of formations
And the rest, then, comes this Wheel

With ignorance and all the others
As the corresponding reasons -
Furthermore, it’s void of maker
Such as Brahmá and so on

To thus perform the function of
Creator of the round of rebirths
So it’s void of any self
Which thus endures pain and pleasure

Equanimity, and more
Conceived of, then, in terms like these -
“This self of mine that speaks and feels” -
So this is how it’s known to be

Thus, lacking any Overlord -
For ignorance, along with its
Dependent factors of formations
Is devoid of permanence

Because it tends to rise and fall
And it's devoid of beauty, too
Because it is defiled, and thus
The cause, then, of defilement, too

And void of pleasure, thus, as well
Since it's oppressed by rise and fall
And void of any selfhood, too
Because it only can exist, then

In dependence on conditions -
Ignorance is not the self
Nor of the self, nor in the self
Nor thus possessed of self, withal

So that is why Becoming's Wheel
When analysed in all these ways
Should thus be comprehended as
Devoid of self in any way

Within its twelvefold links, therefore -
"Its roots are ignorance and craving
Of three times, as past and so on
And to which, there thus belongs

Two, eight, and two, from its twelve factors" -
Two things, ignorance and craving
Should be comprehended as
The basis of Becoming's Wheel -

In terms of past inheritance, then
Ignorance will be the root
And feeling, thus, comes at the end -
In terms of future prolongation

Craving, then, will be the root
And ageing-death comes at the end -
The first applies to beings who
Are sympathetic to false views

And then the second thus applies
To those who favour craving, and
The first removes the lawless view
Because the evidence of fruit

Is absolutely certain proof
There's no destruction of the causes
While the second then removes
The view of permanence, because

It proves the ageing and the dying
Of whatever has arisen -
Thus, the present, past, and future
Are the three times of becoming

And of these, it should be known
According to the written word
That ignorance and, thus, formations
Are connected with the past

And then the eight beginning, thus
With consciousness, are of the present
And the twofold composition
Then, of birth and ageing-death

With future time are, thus, connected -
Next, Becoming's Wheel should be
Thus comprehended, therefore, as
Forever spinning with three rounds

According to its cause and fruit -
"With links of cause, fruit, cause preceding
And four different sections, then
Its spokes are twenty qualities

In triple rounds it always spins" -
Thus in between formations, then
And consciousness, there is one link
Consisting of the cause and fruit

With consciousness, thus, as the fruit
And in between sensations, then
And craving next, there is one link
Consisting of the fruit and cause

With craving as succeeding cause
And in between becoming, then
And birth, therefore, there is one link
Consisting of the cause and fruit

With birth, then, as the next result -
So this is how it's understood
With "links of cause, fruit, cause preceding" -
Yet it thereby has four sections

Correspondingly determined
By the starts and ends of links, so
Ignorance-formations, therefore
Is one section, followed then by

Consciousness and name-and-form
With sixfold-base and contact-feeling
Then the third is craving-clinging
And becoming, followed on by

Birth and ageing-dying, fourth -
So this is how it's understood
To "have four different sections," yet
"Its spokes are twenty qualities"

Which should be understood, then, as -
"There were five causes in the past
And now there is a fivefold fruit
There are five causes, now, as well

And in the future, fivefold fruit" [41] -
Now, as regards the 'five past causes'
These are ignorance, formations
Craving, clinging, and becoming -

Prior karma was produced
From karma-process as becoming
Due to ignorance, and so
Accumulation through formations

From arising of volitions
Was performed, then, with attachment
Which is also known as craving
In performance of the karma

While aspiring for its fruit
From this, *embracing* then arose -
Or thus as ‘clinging’ it is known -
Which either cuts or keeps desire

Along with its possessiveness
As a condition for becoming
In the form, then, of volition
Which is all accumulations

And is, therefore, called ‘formations’ -
As regards the second line
“And now there is a fivefold fruit”
The meaning is, there’s rebirth-linking

Which is ‘consciousness,’ and then
There is descent into the womb
Or ‘name-and-form,’ as it is called
And there is sensitivity

Which is the ‘sixfold base,’ therefore
Then what is touched, which is, thus, ‘contact’
And what’s felt, which is ‘sensation’ -
These five things in this becoming

Have conditions in the past -
And then the third part which, thus, states
“There are five causes, now, as well”
Means craving, clinging, and becoming

The formations that precede them
And the ignorance by which
Deluded people make their karma -
These five things in this becoming

Are conditions for the future -
And the fourth line, then, which is
“And in the future, fivefold fruit”
Means in the future, rebirth-linking

Which is ‘consciousness,’ takes place -
And then descent into the womb
Or ‘name-and-form,’ as it is called
And then there’s sensitivity

Which is the ‘sixfold base,’ and then
There’s what is touched, which is, thus, ‘contact’
And what’s felt, which is ‘sensation’ -
These five aspects of becoming

In the future rebirth-process
Have conditions in the karma
That’s performed here in the present -
So Becoming’s Wheel, therefore

Has “spokes of twenty qualities” -
And after that, then, it was said
“In triple rounds it always spins”
And so formations and becoming

Are the ‘round of karma,’ and then
Ignorance, with craving, thus
And clinging, too, are gathered as
The ‘cycle of defilements,’ and then

Consciousness, and name-and-form
The sixfold base, as well, and contact
And sensations, are grouped as
The ‘cycle of result,’ therefore -

“Becoming’s Wheel forever spins
Revolving over and again
Because conditions are not severed
When the cycle is not severed” -

Meanwhile, therefore, as the Wheel
Rotates and spirals ever onwards
Ignorance confuses us
About the objects of desire

And it’s also a condition
For arising of formations
Which innately form the formed
And are a cause of consciousness

Which comprehends an object, and then
Causes name-and-form to rise
Which then, in turn, consolidates
And instigates the sixfold base

The sixfold base, therefore, arises
With respect to its own fields
And each of them gives rise to contact
Which engages with an object

And is then a cause of feeling
Which experiences, thus
The stimulus, then, of the object
Which becomes a cause of craving

And this craving is, then, lusting
After lust-arousing things
And a condition for becoming
Thereby pitching beings into

Unexpected destinies
Of manifold variety
Which, in its turn, is a condition
For the birth of aggregates

And this in turn is a condition
Thus for ageing-and-demise
Which then ensures the dissolution
And decay of aggregates

Which thus, in turn, is a condition
For the next becoming's rise -
And so the turning of this Wheel
Forever nurtures lamentation

Sorrow, grief, and pain, and death -
"With ignorance as a condition
Thus, there will arise formations"
In this clause there is prevention

Of perception of a maker -
"With formations as condition
Thus arises consciousness"
This clause prevents perception of

The transmigration of a self -
"With consciousness as a condition
Thus arises name-and-form"
This clause prevents perception of

Solidity perceived as ‘self’ -
And all the clauses starting from
“With name-and-form, the sixfold base”
Prevent perception, therefore, of

Thus, any self that sees, and so on
And cognises, touches, feels
And craves and clings, becomes, is born
And then grows old and, lastly, dies -

So therefore, this Becoming’s Wheel
Should, thus, be known and understood
As to prevention of wrong views -
And, furthermore, Becoming’s Wheel

Can be discerned by simile
For ignorance is someone blinded
As it cannot, truly, see
Formations, then, are like her stumbling

And then consciousness, the falling
Name-and-form’s the advent of
A tumour on the fallen nun
The sixfold base is like a swelling

Causing bloating of the tumour
Contact hits the swollen place
Within the tumour constantly, and
Feeling’s the ensuing pain

While craving wants a remedy
And clinging, then, will seize onto
An ill-matched remedy, and then
Becoming’s like the application

Of the ill-matched remedy
Then, birth is like the advent of
A degradation in the tumour -
Ageing-and-demise is then

The final bursting of the tumour -
Ignorance, then, as unknowing
Or false view, is also like
A cataract that fogs the eyes -

The fool befogged involves herself
In more formations, like a grub
That spins the strands of its cocoon
And out of this, then consciousness

Which is, thus, guided by formations
Lodges in the destinies -
A princess guided by her aides
So she can be established, thus

Upon the throne that she desires -
Then consciousness desires rebirth
Generating name-and-form
Within that very rebirth-linking

As magicians do illusions -
After that the sixfold base
Inserted into name-and-form
Then reaches its fulfilment, like

The growth of trees in fertile soil
And contact that is thereby born
From the impingement of the bases
Is the flame that manifests

When fire sticks are rubbed together
Feeling that arises, then
In one who has been touched by contact
Is the burning of the skin

Of those who have been touched by fire
Craving grows in one who feels
Like thirst in one who drinks salt water
Then the person parched with craving

Conjures longing for becoming
Like someone who thirsts for drinks
Who madly clings onto becoming
As a hooked fish won’t let go

Through its incessant greed for bait
Then from becoming, there is birth
Like shoots that spring up from the seeds
Which have been sown in fertile soil

And death is thus a certainty
For anyone who has been born
As falling down is for a tree
That's grown and reached maturity -

So this is how this Wheel should be
Thus cognised 'as to similes'
Each case applied accordingly -
And next, Becoming's Wheel should be

Thus, known as to profundity
For as the Blessed One has said -
"The doctrine of conditional
Origination is profound

And in profundity appears" [D] -
Herein, then, the meaning, thus
Of ageing-death, with birth as root
Is in itself profound, because

It's difficult to understand
The leading antecedent, whereby
Birth itself is a condition
For the end of life, as such -

For neither, then, does ageing-death
Not, therefore, come about from birth
Nor, failing birth, does it arise
From something else within the round

It *only* comes about from birth
Precisely with that very nature
Thus, of ageing-and-demise
And neither, then, does birth itself

Not come about, thus, from becoming
Nor arise from something else
Within the endless round of birth
It *only* rises from becoming

Strictly with that very nature
Thus, of birth within the round
And neither does becoming, then
Not, therefore, come about from clinging

Nor arise from something else
Within the endless round of birth
It *only* comes about from clinging
Strictly with that very nature

Of becoming in the round
And neither, then, does clinging, too
Not, therefore, come about from craving
Nor arise from something else

Within the endless round of birth
It *only* comes about from craving
Strictly with that very nature
Thus, of clinging in the round

And neither, then, does craving, too
Not, therefore, come about from feeling
Nor arise from something else
Within the endless round of birth

It *only* comes about from feeling
Strictly with that very nature
Thus, of craving in the round
And neither, then, does feeling, too

Not, therefore, come about from contact
Nor arise from something else
Within the endless round of birth
It *only* comes about from contact

Strictly with that very nature
Thus, of feeling in the round
And neither, then, does contact, too
Not follow from the sixfold base

Nor arise from something else
Within the endless round of birth
It *only* follows from that base
Precisely with that very nature

Thus, of contact in the round
And neither does the sixfold base
Not come about from name-and-form
Nor, failing that, does it arise

From something else within the round
It *only* comes from name-and-form
Precisely with that very nature
Of the sixfold sense-sphere base

And neither, then, does name-and-form
Not come about from consciousness
Nor, failing that, does it arise
From something else within the round

It *only* comes from consciousness
Precisely with that nature, then
Of mind-materiality
And neither, then, does consciousness

Not come about, thus, from formations
Nor arise from something else
Within the endless round of birth
It *only* rises from formations

Strictly with that very nature
Thus, of consciousness, therein
And neither do formations, then
Not, come about from ignorance

Nor, failing that, do they arise
From something else within the round
They *only* come from ignorance
Precisely with that very nature

Of formations in the round [42] -
And that is why Becoming's Wheel
Is so profound in meaning, here
Accordingly, then, as it's said -

"The knowledge of the fruit from causes
That is what discerns the meaning" [Vbh] -
Thus their aspects are profound, then
Owing to the penetration

Of their basic essences
As being difficult to grasp -
For ignorance, its meaning, therefore
Of unknowing and unseeing

Added to non-penetration
Is, then, in itself profound
And furthermore formations, then
As forming and accumulating

With and without avarice
Is thus profound in meaning, too
And consciousness as void, as well
Yet manifesting rebirth-linking -

All of this without migration
From the antecedent birth -
Then name-and-form as linked arising
As resolved to parts, or not

And being thus molested, and
As being bent upon an object
Is profound, as well, and then
The sixfold-base predominance

As world and door and field, and as
Possession of objective field
Is thus profound, as well, and then
There's contact, which is touching, and

Impingement and coincidence
And also thus concurrence, then
There's feeling that encounters, thus
An object's stimulus, thereby

As pleasure, pain, neutrality
As soulless, and as what is felt
And craving as delighting in
Or thus as a committal-to

As current, as a bindweed, as
A river, as the ocean, and
Impossible to fill, and then
There's clinging, thus, as grasping and

As seizing, misinterpreting
Adhering to, and hard to get by
And the meaning of becoming
As accumulating, therefore

And as forming, and then flinging
Into many kinds of rebirth
Into destiny, abode
Therefore, and station furthermore

And the significance of birth
As therefore, coming into birth
And then descent into the womb
And as a rebirth, and appearance

And the meaning also, then
Of ageing-death as demolition
Falling, break-up, and of change -
So all of this is labelled as

Profundity of penetration -
Next, Becoming's Wheel should also
Then be known accordingly
As to the kinds of method, whereby

Meaning can be thus discerned,[43] as
Firstly, then, non-interruption
Of the continuity -
"With ignorance as a condition

Thus, formations will arise
And with formations as condition
Consciousness will then arise" -
Which, like the process of a seed

That goes from shoot until the tree
And other likewise states, is called
The 'method of identity'
Which thus abandons fatalism -

One who sees this truth perceives
The links of continuity
Occurring, thus, through cause and fruit
But one who sees it wrongly, then

Will cling to lasting views of self
By grasping to identity
As if it is non-interruption
Of the chain occurring, then

Through linking of the cause and fruit -
And next among the kinds of method
Treating of Becoming's Wheel
Defining of the aspects, thus

Of ignorance, formations and
Then all the rest, is therefore called
The 'method of diversity' -
"It interrupts the view of suffering

Therefore it is ignorance
From ignorance there are formations
With an aspect, thus, of forming
From this, consciousness arises

With an aspect of awareness
Cognisance, or recognition -
Then from consciousness arises
Two things, first 'mentality'

Forever bending to an object -
And 'materiality'
Whose aspect is to be molested
By all matter in its field -

From this the sixfold base arises
With the mark of actuating -
So it goes 'til ageing-death" -
So thus discarding permanence

A nun who sees this truth perceives
The issuing of each new state
But one who sees it wrongly, then
Will cling onto the lawless view

Of self as a diversity
Within a continuity
As though it were a broken one -
And next, among the kinds of method

Treating of Becoming's Wheel
The unconcern of ignorance
Or lack of wanting, thus, to know
"Formations must be made by me"

Or, also on formations' part, like
"Consciousness is made by us"
And all the rest, is therefore called
The 'method of disinterest,' therefore

One who sees this truth abandons
Views of self by cognising
The non-existence of a maker -
One who sees it wrongly, clings to

Moral-inefficacy-
Of-action as a view, because
She can't see that the function, thus
Of ignorance and all the rest

Has been established as a law
By their respective essences -
And next, among the kinds of method
Treating of Becoming's Wheel

Production of formations only
And naught else, from ignorance
And likewise, then, the other links
From their respective stimulants -

Like that of curd with milk, and more -
Is therefore called the 'method,' then
'Of certain regularity'
For those who cultivate this truth

Will thus abandon no-cause views
And moral-inefficacy-
Of-action as a view, and thereby
Fathom how the fruit accords

With its reciprocal condition -
One who sees it wrongly, then
Perceiving it as non-production
Of all things from anything

Instead of fully apprehending
Linked occurrence of fruition
In accordance with conditions
Clings onto the no-cause view

And thus the creed of fatalism -
“So Becoming’s Wheel, therefore
As to the function of its links
Prevention, too, and similes

Profundity, and methods, therein
Should be known accordingly” -
For no one, even in a dream
Has fled the fearful round of rebirths

Which destroys all in its path
Just like a blazing thunderbolt
Unless the Wheel has thus been severed
With the knife of knowledge, whetted

On the stone of concentration
Penetrating through the maze
Of methods and profundity -
For thus, the Blessed One has said -

“The doctrine of conditional
Origination is profound
And in profundity appears
And it is through not knowing, then

And through not penetrating it
This generation has become
A tangled skein, a knotted ball
Root-matted as a bed of reeds

That can’t escape the round of rebirths
With its woeful states of loss
Unhappy destinies, and thus
Its false enslavement to perdition” [D] -

Therefore, with attention on
The transcendental merit of
Her own and others’ blessings, and
Abandoning her other duties

Let a sage with mindfulness
So practice that she may begin
To find a footing in the deeps
Of the dependent origin

14 – Purification of View

A nun who wants to, thus, accomplish
Purity of view, should, therefore
With serenity and insight
Focus, first, on mindfulness of

Body, breath, the recollections
Death, and the divine abidings
And disgust in nutriment
And also, then, the elements

The aggregates, the bases and
The faculties, the Noble Truths
And finally the deepest truth
That is dependent origin -

And then in order to abandon
Any worldly designation
Of ‘a being’ and ‘a person’
And to overcome confusion

She should verify this meaning -
“This is mere name-and-form
There is no being, and no person”
As the Ancient Ones have said -

“As with assembly of the parts
The name of ‘chariot’s’ applied
So, when the aggregates are present
‘Being,’ then, is utilised [S]

As when a space is thus enclosed
With timber, creepers, grass, and clay
That, therefore, in the common usage
‘House’ is, then, the word we say

So, when that space is then enclosed
With bones and sinews, flesh, and skin
There comes to be the term, therefore
Of ‘bodily formation,’ then” [M] -

Thus, name-and-form is illustrated -
Not a being, not a person -
Just as when component parts
Like axles, wheels, and frames, and so on

Are arranged a certain way
There comes to be the mere term
Of ‘chariot’ in common usage
Even though when they’re discerned

There’s no such thing as chariot -
And just as when component parts
Like wattles, timber, grass, and clay
Enclose a space a certain way

There comes to be the mere term
Of ‘house,’ therefore, in common usage
Even though when they’re inspected
No such thing as house is found -

And just as when component parts
Like fingers, knuckles, thumb, and so on
Are positioned in one way
There comes to be the mere term

Of ‘fist,’ therefore, in common usage
Even though, when they’re inspected
No such thing as fist is found -
And just as when component parts

Like houses, gardens, streets, and so on
Are arranged a certain way
There comes to be the mere term
Of ‘city,’ thus, in common usage

Even though when they’re discerned
There’s no such thing as city there -
And just as when component parts
Like branches, leaves, and trunk, and so on

Are arranged a certain way
There comes to be the mere term
Of ‘tree,’ therefore, in common usage
Even though when they’re inspected

No such thing as tree is found -
So just as with components of
The fivefold aggregates of clinging
Then the mere term of ‘being’

Comes to be in common usage
Even though, when they're discerned
No being can be found as base
For the assumption of an 'I'

That thus resides within, thereby -
For in the ultimate of senses
It's just name-and-form, and so
The view of one who sees this way

Is therefore known as proper vision -
When someone rejects this vision
And assumes a lasting being
Then the one choice she can make

Is if it is destroyed or not -
If she concludes it is destroyed
She's caught by nihilistic views
And if she says it's not destroyed

She's trapped in the eternal view
For this assumption thus precludes
The chance of any gradual change -
Like that of milk becoming curd

And so she's either reticent
And says the being is eternal
Or she overreaches, and
Concludes it is annihilated

Hence the Blessed One has said -
"For thus there are two kinds of view -
When beings are obsessed by them
Then some hold back, some overreach

And only those with pure eyes see
So, why do some of them hold back?
For beings, therefore, love becoming
They're delighted in becoming

And they revel in becoming
Yet, when Dharma's explicated
And cessation is expounded
Then they cannot penetrate it

So their minds do not become
Established, firm, or resolute
And so it is that some hold back -
Yet why do others overreach?

Because that very same becoming
Makes them feel humiliated
And disgusted and ashamed, so
They're obsessed with non-becoming -

'With the breakup of this body
Self should be annihilated
Not returning after death
For that seems peaceful, that seems true

And that must be the most sublime'
And thus it is they overreach -
And how do those with pure eyes see?
A sage who has the view, will see

What is become as, thus, become
And then embarks upon the way
That culminates in great dispassion
In the fading off of greed

And in its ultimate cessation -
Thus, the ones with pure eyes see" [Ps] -
And so, just as a marionette
Is empty, soulless, and devoid

Of any curiosity
Yet while it walks and stands, it seems
To have that curiosity
As well as, thus, attentiveness

So too, this name-and-form, therefore
Is empty, soulless, and devoid
Of any curiosity
Or any interest, thus, and yet

It still appears as if it had
That interest and attentiveness -
So this is how the one with eyes
Will see all things thus scrutinised -

“For mental and material
As name-and-form, are really here
But here, there is no living being
Anywhere that can be found

For it is void, without a soul
And merely fashioned like a doll
It’s just an aggregate of suffering
Piled up like a heap of kindling” -

Just as when two sheaves of reeds
Are propped up, one against the other
Each one furnishing support
That when one falls, the other falls

So likewise, therefore, in becoming
Name-and-form will thus arise, then
As a co-dependent state
With each part giving base support

So that the other can exist
And then upon approach of death
When one succumbs, they both succumb
So that is why it has been said -

“For mind and matter are, thus, twins
And each supports the other, therefore
When one breaks, they both break up
Through mutual co-dependency” -

For just as when a sound occurs
Supported by a drum that’s beaten
Thus, the drum is one component
And the sound another, and

Thus, neither one is mixed together
Each is void, then, of the other
So too, then, when ‘name’ occurs
Supported by the ‘form’ that’s known as

Corporal basis, door, and object
Form is thereby one component
And then name’s another part
And neither one is mixed together

Each is void, then, of the other
And yet ‘name’ will still occur
Thus, owing to the ‘form,’ just as
The sound arises from the drum -

“For contact comes not from the eye
Or from things seen, or in between
It’s from a cause that it appears
Like something born, to take a form

And contact comes not from the ear
Or yet from sound, or in between
It’s from a cause that it appears
Like something born, to take a form

And contact comes not from the nose
Or yet from smells, or in between
It’s from a cause that it appears
Like something born, to take a form

And contact comes not from the tongue
Or yet from taste, or in between
It’s from a cause that it appears
Like something born, to take a form

And contact comes not from the body
Or from touch, or in between
It’s from a cause that it appears
Like something born, to take a form -

And contact doesn’t come from matter
Neither does it issue from
The mental-datum base, and yet
It’s from a cause that it appears

Like something born, to take a form -
Just like the sound that issues from
A beaten drum, thus, so it comes” -
And furthermore, mentality

Has no efficient power, whereby
It can, by itself, occur
It does not eat, or drink, or speak
And can’t exhibit postures, and

So too, materiality
Has no efficient power, whereby
It can, by itself, occur
For, thereby, it has no desire

Thus, to eat, or drink, or speak
Or to exhibit postures, thus
But rather, it is when supported
By materiality

Mentality will then occur
And from mentality's support
Materiality occurs -
So when mentality desires

Thus, to eat, and drink, and speak
Or to exhibit any postures
Then materiality
Performs these actions in its stead

And so there is a simile
In order, then, to make this clear -
A blind man and a crawling cripple
Wanted, thus, to go somewhere

The blind man told the cripple, thus -
"Look, I can use my legs for movement
But I have no eyes to see
What's rough or smooth upon the road"

The cripple said, "Look, I have vision
But I have no legs with which
To go and come upon the road"
And so the blind man let the cripple

Clamber up onto his shoulder
And from there the cripple said -
"Now, leave the left, and take the right
Now, leave the right, and take the left" -

Herein, the blind man, therefore, is
Without efficient power, whereby
He can travel by himself
And thus the cripple, also, is

Without efficient power, whereby
He can travel by himself
But nothing can prevent their steps
When they support each other, thus

And so, mentality as well
Has no efficient power, whereby
In a given function, therefore
It can, by itself, occur

And thus materiality
Has no efficient power, whereby
In a given function, therefore
It can, by itself, occur

But nothing can prevent their rise
When they support each other, thus
And so, this view of name-and-form
Is known as Purity of View -

“They can’t arise by their own strength
Or be maintained by their own strength
Support from other states, they need
Thus, weak and formed, they come to be

They rise with others as condition
Spurred by others as their objects
Formed by objects and conditions
Thus, by others than themselves -

As people, thus, depend on boats
To venture forth across the sea
The matter-body for occurrence
Mental body, therefore, needs

As boats depend on people, too
To venture forth across the sea
The mental body for occurrence
Matter-body, therefore, needs

So thus, depending on each other
Boats and people go to sea -
And so do mind and matter, both
The one, therefore, the other needs”

15 – Purification by Overcoming Doubt

Now, ‘cleansing by surmounting doubt’
Is knowledge that’s established by
Prevailing over doubt about
The three divisions, then, of time

Through analysing the conditions
Of this name-and-form, therefore -
And those who would accomplish this
Should search for the conditions for

All mind and matter, just as when
A skilled physician finds an illness
And investigates its source
Or when a person of compassion

Sees a child upon its back
Recumbent on a busy road
And wonders who its parents are -
So first, one should consider thus -

“This mind and matter is not causeless
For if so, it follows then, that
With no causes to divide it
It would be a carbon copy

Everywhere, always, for all
So therefore, then, there cannot be
An Overlord, or Primal Source
That sits above this name-and-form

And nor is name-and-form itself
An Overlord, or Primal Source
For then it would itself be causeless
Consequently, there must be, then

A condition and a cause -
And also when this body’s born
It’s not inside a lily, or
Within a pearl or jewellery store

Conversely, then, the body is -
Just like a worm in rotting flesh
A putrid corpse, or dough that’s mouldy -
Born between receptacles

For food that is, or is not 'cooked'
Behind the belly lining, which is
Cloaked by bowel and entrails, and
A place that smells, and is disgusting

And extremely cramped, therefore
And so it is itself disgusting -
When it's born thus, its root-causes
Are the four things, then, as follows -

Ignorance and craving, and then
Clinging, too, and also karma
For they bring about its birth
And nutriment is its condition

Since it, thus, consolidates -
So five things make up name-and-form
The three that start with ignorance
Provide support, then, for the body

As the mother does her infant
And then karma thus begets it
As the father does the child
And nutriment will then sustain it

As the wet-nurse does the infant" -
After having thus discerned
The corporal body, in this way
Attention should be then directed

To the mental body, therein -
"Due to eyes and visual objects
Thus, eye-consciousness arises" [s] -
Having seen that the occurrence

Thus, of name-and-form, thereby
Is owing to conditions, then
One sees that in the past, as now
Conditions brought about occurrence

Therefore, in the future, too
Occurrence rises from conditions -
Puzzlement about the past
Is thus abandoned with this view, like

“Was I in the past, or not?
And what was I, and how was I?” **M**
And puzzlement about the future
Is abandoned then as well, like

“Shall I, thus, be in the future?
Shall I not? And what will I be
In the future, and then, how?” **M**
And puzzlement about the present

Is abandoned then as well, like
“Am I, thus, or am I not?
And what am I, and how am I?
From whence, then, has this being come?

And whither is it bound, therefore?” **M**
Conditions, thus, for name-and-form
Can also, thereby, be discerned
Through viewing karma and its fruit

Within the round of threefold time -
“For in the past becoming, thus
There is delusion, and formations
There’s attachment, which is craving

And embracing, which is clinging
And volition, or becoming
All these are conditions, thus
For rebirth-linking here and now -

This rebirth-linking then arises
As internal consciousness
Along with mind-and-matter, and
The sixfold base, and what is touched

Or contact, and then feeling, too
And all these things in this becoming
Have conditions, then, in karma
Executed in the past

And therefore in the present, with
Maturing of the bases, then
There is delusion, and formations
There’s attachment, which is craving

And embracing, which is clinging
And volition, or becoming
All these are conditions, thus
For rebirth-linking in the future

And this rebirth-linking rises
As internal consciousness
Along with mind-and-matter, and
The sixfold base, and what is touched

Or contact, and then feeling, too
And these things in the next becoming
Have conditions in the karma
Executed here and now" [Ps] -

So herein, karma is fourfold -
To be experienced here and now
To be experienced, thus, on rebirth
Furthermore, to be experienced

In some subsequent becoming
And then karma that's expired -
The first, experienced here and now
Is that whose fruit is thus experienced

In this present selfhood, then
For while it has no opposition
And it is, thus, a condition
Yet it has the slightest power

Over aspects in the round
And also has no repetition
Therefore having small results
Because it does not look beyond

The current continuity
And does not look to, thus, obtain
A future opportunity
And so it gives its fruit, then in

Becoming, like a mere flower -
If conditions fail to rise
There's no result within that selfhood
And the karma lapses, then -

Volition that achieves its goal
In giving, killing, and so on
Will be experienced, then, on rebirth
So it gives its fruit, thus, in

The next becoming to the present -
If conditions fail to rise
The karma lapses, as before -
Volition, then, between these two

Is karma that's experienced
Within some subsequent becoming
Giving fruit, then, in the future
And it never thus expires -

Then there is the karma which is
Classed as 'weighty' or 'habitual'
'Near-to-death,' or also as
'What was performed in previous rebirths' -

When there's *weighty karma*, then
The greater weight it carries, therein
Whether tainted or constructive
With its roots in matricide

Or thus performed in higher realms
Has precedence in ripening -
And likewise with *habitual karma*
When its more habitual

Regardless if it's good or bad
It takes the lead in ripening -
And karma that is *near-to-death*
Is that recalled upon demise

For when someone who's near to death
Remembers karma, she is born
According to that karma, then -
And karma that is not included

In the previous kinds of karma
And has often been repeated
Is the karma that is called
What was *performed in previous rebirths*

And it causes rebirth-linking
If the other karma fails -
And karma's also fourfold as
'Productive' and 'consolidating'

Then 'frustrating' and 'supplanting' -
Herein, what is called *productive*
Is both tainted and constructive
Forming, thus, the aggregates

At rebirth-linking, and then also
During continuity
Or as materiality
Arising from results of karma

Culminating in fruition -
That which is *consolidating*
Boosts the life of joy and pain
For it cannot produce results

But when results have been produced
It elevates the pain and pleasure
Thereby formed, and makes it last -
Or when some karma is performed

That aids the fruit of other karma
By suppression or arousal
Of the relevant conditions
That's *consolidating*, too -

And when results have been produced
By other karma's rebirth-linking
That which is *frustrating karma*
Blocks the joy and pain therein

And won't allow it thus to last -
Or it is the obstruction, then
Of tainted or constructive fruit
Through illness or disquietude -

Supplanting karma is itself
Both tainted and constructive, and
It cuts off weaker karma, then
And makes its own result arise

So when this opportunity
Is furnished by the other karma
That which is *supplanting*, then
Is what is thereby called ‘arisen’ -

When some karma has been done
By which the fruit of other karma
Is destroyed or thus cut off
Although it’s fit for longer life

Because of the efficacy
Thus, of the karma that produced it
That is also called *supplanting* -
Such is karma in the round -

“Thus, karma fruit proceeds from karma
Fruit has karma for its source, and
Future being springs from karma
In this way, the world goes round

And one who sees this, has no doubt” -
And so there’s only name-and-form
In all kinds of becoming, then
In destiny, and generation

Station and abode, as well
Occurring, thus, through cause and fruit
And nothing else within the round -
No doer is above the doing

And no bearer of results
Can thus be found, who is, therein
Above occurrence of results
And yet the wise will still say ‘doer’

When there’s doing and, as well
‘Experiencer,’ when there is
Experiencing, therefore, as
A mode of common usage, as

It has been said, thus, by the Wise -
“There is no doer of a deed
Or one who reaps the deed’s result
Phenomena alone flow on

No other view than this, is right
And so, while karma and its fruit
Thus, causally maintain their round
As seed and tree succeed in turn

No first beginning can be found
Nor in the future round of births
Can they be found not to occur -
Sectarians, not knowing this

Have failed to gain self-mastery
They think a being is eternal
Or it is annihilated
And adopt deluded views

Each contradicting one another
Thus, the stream of craving flows
And traps them all within their views
And as the stream, thus, bears them on

They can't be freed from suffering -
A nun, disciple of the Buddha
With her knowledge of this fact
Can penetrate this deep and subtle

Void conditionality -
There is no karma in result
Nor does result exist in karma
Though they're void of one another

There's no fruit without the karma
Just as fire's not inside
The sun, a gem, or dung, nor yet
Outside them, but is brought to be

By means of its component parts
So neither can result be found
Within the karma, nor without
Nor does the karma still persist

Within results it has produced -
The karma of its fruit is void
No fruit exists, yet, in the karma
Still the fruit is born from it

Depending wholly on the karma -
Here, there is no Brahmá God
Creator of the round of births
Phenomena, alone, flow on

With cause-component, their condition" -
When one has discerned conditions
Of mentality-and-form
Through means of karma and result

And given up uncertainty
About the future, present, past
One's understanding will be thus -
"The aggregates that were collated

In the past surceased there, too
But others are collated, then
In this becoming, even though
No single thing has transmigrated

From the past to this becoming
And the aggregates produced
In this becoming will surcease
And aggregates will be produced, then

In the next becoming, thereby
In the future, even though
No single thing will transmigrate
From this becoming to the future -

Furthermore, then, just as while
A recitation does not transfer
From the teacher to the pupil
Recitation still takes place

Within the pupil's mouth, thereby
And though the jewels upon a face
Do not pass over to the image
Of the face within a mirror

Ornaments will still appear -
And while the flame, thus, of a lamp
Does not move to another wick
And yet the flame is still produced

So too, while nothing whatsoever
Thus, in any shape or form
Will transfer from the past becoming
To the present one, thereby

Or from this to the future one
Yet aggregates and bases, and
The elements are still produced
In this becoming, with those from

The past becoming as conditions
Also, in the future, too -
For aggregates and bases, and
The elements are still produced

With those from here, as their condition -
Consciousness of eye thus follows
Coming next, then, after mind
Which, though it does not come from that

Yet fails not, next, to be produced
So conscious continuity
in rebirth-linking, thus, takes place -
The prior consciousness breaks up

The subsequent is born from that
They have no interval between
Nor gap, that separates the two -
While naught whatever transmigrates

Yet rebirth-linking still takes place" [Ps] -
The knowledge that is, thus, established
By the vanquishing of doubt
Regarding, therefore, threefold time

Is also known as 'knowledge of
The causal linkages of states'
And is an understanding and
Discernment of conditions, thus -

"For dwelling in impermanence
She rightly knows and sees the sign
So as 'right seeing' it is known
And, thus, by inference from that

Then all formations are established
Clearly as impermanent
And thereby doubt is, thus, abandoned -
When she sees it all as painful

Then she rightly knows occurrence
Hence, ‘right seeing,’ thus, is said
And so by inference from that
Then all formations are established

Very clearly, thus, as painful
And so doubt is then abandoned -
When she sees it all as selfless
Then she rightly knows and sees

Both sign and also, thus, occurrence
Hence, ‘right seeing’ it is called
And so by inference from that
Then all formations are established

Very clearly, thus, as not-self
Whereby doubt is then abandoned” [Ps] -
Herein, then, it may be asked -
“In meaning, then, are they the same

Or are they different in some way?”
“Attested knowledge and right view
And overcoming, thus, of doubt
Are only, therefore, one in meaning -

Only by the letter, then
Is any difference thus discerned” [Ps] -
A nun who practices this insight
And becomes possessed of knowledge

And established in Right View
Finds comfort in the Dispensation
As a base, and she will be
Thus certain of her destiny -

“So would a sister overcome
Her doubts then, ever mindfully -
Let her discern conditions, both
Of mind and matter thoroughly”

16 – Purification by Knowing What is and What is Not the Path

Now, ‘filtering by knowledge of
What is, and what is not, the path’
Is knowledge that arises, then
From understanding path and not-path -

Those who would accomplish this
Should first apply themselves, then, to
Inductive insight, which is known as
‘Comprehension, thus, by groups’

For of full-understanding, then
There are three classes - ‘as the known’
And ‘as investigation,’ and then
‘As abandoning’ is third -

So herein, that which thus occurs
By noting the specific aspects
Of each individual state -
“Materiality has, thus

The aspect, then, to be molested
Feeling has the aspect, then
Of being felt,” and all the rest
Is thus *full-knowledge as the known* -

And following, then, after that
The knowledge that consists in insight
Which has aspects as its object
And accordingly accredits

General aspects to those states -
“Materiality is thus
Impermanent and transient
And so is feeling and perception

And volition and the mind”
Is *knowledge as investigation* -
Following, then, after that
The knowledge that consists in insight

With the aspects as its object
Which arises, therefore, as
Removing views of permanence
Or nihilism, and so on

Is thus entitled, therein, as
Full-knowledge as abandoning -
“For when she apprehends formations
In their total transience

A nun abandons the perception
Thus, of any permanence
And when she apprehends formations
As a world of pain and grief

She then abandons the perception
Thus, of any pleasure there
And when she apprehends formations
As devoid of any self

She then abandons the perception
Thus, of any selfhood there
And when she views them with dispassion
She abandons all the craving

That’s accompanied by joy
And when she causes fading off
She then abandons all her greed
And when she contemplates cessation

She abandons the arousing
Of formations and arising -
When she then relinquishes
She thus abandons all her grasping” [Ps] -

All these states are thus defined
In summary then, therefore, as follows -
“Any form whatever, whether
Past or present, future, or

Internal or external, or
Overt or subtle, high or low
Should thus be understood, therein
As painful and impermanent

Devoid of self, and all the rest -
And any feeling whatsoever
All perceptions whatsoever
All formations whatsoever

Any consciousness whatever
Thus, it should be all defined
The eye, the ear, the nose, and so on
All the way to ageing-death

In past or present, future, as
Not-lasting, painful, and not-self -
Thus, painful in the sense of terror
Selfless, as without a core

Impermanent, due to destruction
Nothing less, and nothing more" [Ps] -
Thus, all of this should then be known as
Knowledge, then, of comprehension

So it should be summarised -
"Materiality, that's in
The past, the present, or the future
Is impermanent, and formed

Dependently arisen, and it's
Subject to destruction, and then
Subject to a fall, and also
Fading off and, thus, cessation" [Ps] -

Then it should be broadened to -
"The aggregates and consciousness
The sixfold base, and so on in
The past, the present, or the future

Are impermanent, and formed
Dependently arisen, and are
Subject to destruction, and then
Subject to a fall, and also

Fading off and, thus, cessation" [Ps] -
Furthermore, in summary -
"With birth as a condition, then
There's ageing-and-demise, so that

When birth's not there as a condition
There's no ageing-and-demise
And with becoming as condition
There is always birth, so then

Without becoming, there's no birth -
'Til ignorance as a condition
Brings formations, and yet then
When ignorance does not exist

Formations don't arise, and thus
It's then applied to past and future" [Ps] -
Once again, this should be known as
Knowledge, then, of comprehension -

Thus, the formed and formless, then
Are subject to the threefold aspects
Of impermanence and pain
And selflessness, therefore, as well -

And so in order, then, to strengthen
Knowledge in conformity, and
Comprehension, thereby, of
Impermanence, and pain, and not-self

Sisters should, therefore, begin
Analysis of forty aspects
In the fivefold aggregates
Where each and every aggregate

Is viewed, then, as *impermanent*
Because of their non-endlessness
And also, thus, because they're in
Possession of a start and end -

And they are *painful*, too, because
They are oppressed by rise and fall
And thus the basis, then, for pain -
And so they're seen as a *disease*

Because they're subject to conditions
And because they are the essence
And the root, thus, of disease -
They're also seen, then, as *a boil*

Because they are impaled by pain
And always oozing with defilements
And they're swollen by arising
Ripened, then, by ageing, and then

Burst apart by dissolution -
Next, they're seen, then, as *a dart*
Because they generate oppression
Penetrate inside, and thus

Are difficult to extricate -
They're also *a calamity*
Because they have to be condemned
And due to bringing loss, they are

The basis for calamity -
They're seen as *an affliction*, too
Because one's freedom is restricted
And because they are the basis

And foundation for affliction -
And they're seen as *alien*
Because there is no exercising
Of one's power over them

And also, thus, because of their
Intractability, therein -
And next, they are *disintegrating*
Due to ceaseless crumbling, then

Through sickness, ageing and demise -
They're also viewed, then, as *a plague*
Because they always bring about
A multitude of rack and ruin -

And they're seen as *a disaster*
Due to bringing plentiful
And unforeseen adversity
And also, thus, because they are

The basis for all kinds of terror
And in opposition to
The greatest comfort, which is called
The stilling of all suffering -

And then they are *a menace*, too
Because of being bound up with
A legion of adversity
And being menaced by disease

And lacking fitness for attention -
Furthermore, they're seen as *fickle*
Due to insecurity
From sickness, ageing, and demise

And also from the worldly states, of
Pain and pleasure, praise and blame
And gain and loss, and fame and shame -
They're also *prone to perishing*

Because they have the nature to
Disintegrate and disappear
Through violence, and through nature's course -
They're also seen as *unenduring*

As they have the habit of
Collapsing, thus, on all occasions
And they lack solidity -
They're also seen as *no protection*

As they can't provide protection
And they cannot offer safety -
And they have *no shelter*, too
Because they lack the fitness of

Providing shelter, and because
They can't perform the function of
A shelter, then, for the unsheltered -
And they also have *no refuge*

As they can't disperse the fear
In those who thus depend on them -
They're also seen as *empty*, too
Because they're void of lastingness

And beauty, pleasure, and the self
That are conceived to be within them -
And they're also seen as *vain*
Since they consist of emptiness

And also triviality
For what is trivial, is thereby
Then, known as 'vain' within the world -
They're also seen as *void*, because

They are devoid, then, of the state
Of being, thus, an owner, or
Abider, doer, or director
Or, then, an experiencer -

And they're seen as *not-self*, too
Because they do not have an owner
Or abider, or director
Doer, or experiencer -

And they're seen as *danger*, too
Because of all the suffering in
The process of becoming, and
Because there's danger in the suffering -

Or they're seen as *danger*, thus
Because it mirrors misery
Since danger moves to misery
Which is a term for wretched folk

And aggregates are wretched, too -
And they are *liable to change*
And in two ways, they have this nature -
Due to ageing, and through death -

And furthermore, they *have no core*
Because of feebleness within
And being prone, then, to decay -
And they are also, thus, seen as

The root of all calamity
Because of always being, then
The cause of all calamity -
They're also seen as *murderous*

Because of breaking faith, just like
A foe who's posing as a friend -
And furthermore, then, they are seen
As *due to be annihilated*

For it's in their nature, then
That their becoming disappears
And non-becoming comes about -
And they are *subject*, then, *to cankers*

Which are, thus, their nearest cause
And *formed*, as well, because of being
Formed by causes and conditions -
And they're *Māra's bait*, as well

Because they are the bait that's planted
By the Māra of demise
And also of defilement, too -
And they are also *subject*, then

To birth and ageing, illness, death
Because they have these as their nature
And they're *subject*, too, *to sorrow*
Lamentation, and despair

Because they are the cause of sorrow
Lamentation, and despair -
And finally, the aggregates
Are *subject to defilement*, due to

Being the objective field
Of the defilements, thus, of craving
And misconduct, and wrong view -
Now there are fifty contemplations

Of impermanence, herein
If we apply this group of ten
To each and every aggregate -
Impermanent, disintegrating

Fickle, prone to perishing
And unenduring, prone to change
Without the essence of a core
And due to be annihilated -

Also being formed, and then
As being subject to demise -
Of contemplations, then, of not-self
There are twenty-five, therein

If we apply this group of five
To each and every aggregate -
As alien and empty, and
As vain and void, and not-self, too -

The contemplations, then, of pain
Are thus a hundred-twenty-five
By taking all the others, starting
From ‘as painful, as disease’

For each and every aggregate -
Now when a wise nun, thus, discerns
The fivefold aggregates, therein
By means of comprehension, thus

As changing, painful, and not-self
In these two hundred aspects, then
‘Inductive insight,’ thus, will be
Imbued with mighty potency -

And next, a sister should engage
In seven insights of formations
By applying threefold aspects
To materiality -

The first of these is thereby known as
‘Taking up and putting down’
Where *taking up* is rebirth-linking
And then *putting down* is death -

The meditator, thus, should have
One hundred years allotted for
This ‘taking up’ and ‘putting down’
And after that they should apply

The threefold aspects to formations
As formations in these limits
Are thereby impermanent
Because of the occurrence, then

Of rise and fall, and constant change
And due to temporariness
And non-existent permanence -
But since formations, once arisen

Have arrived at presence, and
When present, they will surely be
Afflicted, thus, by ageing, and
Upon arriving at old age

Their only goal is to dissolve
Then therefore, they are full of pain
Because of looped oppression, and
Because of being hard to bear

The basis of all suffering, and
Because all pleasure is excluded -
And since no one can control
Formations once arisen, thus

And as there is no exercising
Of one's power over them
Then thus it is that they are not-self
Since they're void and ownerless

And unsusceptible, then, to
The influence of any power
And then, finally, because
Of all preclusion of a self -

So having thus attributed
The threefold aspects in this way
The meditator next applies
The vanishing of what grows old

In each and every stage of life -
So here, that same one hundred years
Is split up in a threefold stage -
The first, the middle, and the last -

The first comprises thirty-three
The middle, then, is thirty-four
And then the last is thirty-three -
And once these stages have been set

The threefold aspects are applied -
"For all materiality
Occurring in the first stage, therefore
Ceased within that stage, without

Arriving at the middle stage
So therefore it's impermanent
And what's impermanent is painful
And what's painful is not-self -

And all materiality
Occurring in the middle stage
Surceased within that stage, without
Arriving at the final stage

So it's impermanent, as well
And also painful, and not-self -
And lastly, in the final stage
There's no materiality

Occurring in the thirty-three
Comprising, thus, the final years
That can survive or outlast death
So it's impermanent, as well

And also painful, and not-self -
And next, that same one hundred years
Is split up into ten decades -
So herein, then, the first decade

Is thereby called the *tender decade*
As a person in those years
Is yet a tender, wavering child -
And then the next ten years, thereby

Are labelled as the *sport decade*
Because a person in those years
is very fond of sport, therein -
The next ten years that follow that

Are known, then, as the *beauty decade*
As one's beauty, in those years
Has thereby reached its pinnacle -
The next ten years that follow that

Are then known as the *strength decade*
For strength and power, in those years
Have thereby reached their pinnacle -
The next ten years are then known as

The *understanding decade*, thus
For in these years, then, understanding
Will be well-established, therein
Whether it is strong or weak -

The next ten years are thereby called
The *decade of decline*, therein
For thus it is that in these years
Capacity for sport, thereby

And beauty, strength, and understanding
All descend into decline -
The next ten years that follow that
Are known, then, as the *stooping decade*

As it is that in these years
One's figure stoops and angles down -
And then there is the *bent decade*
For thus it is that in these years

One's figure then becomes all bent
Just like the curving of a plough -
The next ten years that follow that
Are known, then, as the *dotage decade*

As it is that in these years, then
One is doting, and forgets -
And then there is the *prone decade*
For centenarians will mostly

Spend their time just lying prone -
Then once these decades have been set
The threefold aspects are applied -
"For all materiality

Occurring in the first decade, then
Ceases in that decade, thus
Without arriving at the next
So therefore it's impermanent

And also painful, and not-self -
And all materiality
Occurring in the second decade
Ceases in that decade, thus

Without arriving at the next
So therefore it's impermanent
And also painful, and not-self" -
And this continues, then, until -

“And all materiality
Occurring in the tenth decade, then
Ceases there and does not, thereby
Reach the next becoming, thus -

So therefore it’s impermanent
And also painful, and not-self” -
And next, that same one hundred years
Is split up into twenty parts -

And once these parts have thus been set
The threefold aspects are applied -
“For all materiality
Occurring in the first five years, then

Ceases there, and doesn’t reach
The second group of five, therein
So therefore it’s impermanent
And also painful, and not-self -

And all materiality
Occurring in the second five, then
Ceases there and doesn’t, thereby
Reach the third five years, therein

So therefore it’s impermanent
And also painful, and not-self” -
And this continues, then, until -
“And all materiality

Occurring in the twentieth group
Ceases there because there’s nothing
That survives or outlasts death
So therefore it’s impermanent

And also painful, and not-self” -
And next, that same one hundred years
Is split up into twenty-five
And analysed in groups of four -

And then it’s separated further
Into smaller groups of three -
Then groups of two, and finally
A hundred parts of one year each -

And next, the threefold aspects are
Attributed according to
‘The vanishing of what grows old
In each and every stage of life’

By means, then, of the threefold seasons -
“All materiality
Occurring in the rainy season
Ceases in that season, thus

Without arriving at the winter -
All materiality
Occurring in the winter, therefore
Ceases in that season, then

Without arriving at the summer -
All materiality
Occurring in the summer, therefore
Ceases in that season, then

And doesn’t reach the rains again -
So therefore it’s impermanent
And also painful, and not-self” -
And next, the threefold aspects are

Attributed according to
‘The vanishing of what grows old
In each and every stage of life’
By means, then, of the sixfold seasons -

“All materiality
Occurring in the two months, then
Within the rainy season, therefore
Ceases in that season, then

Without arriving at the autumn -
And all materiality
Occurring in the autumn, therefore
Ceases in that season, then

Without arriving at the winter -
All materiality
Occurring in the winter, therefore
Ceases in that season, then

Without arriving at its end
And all materiality
Occurring at the end of winter
Ceases in that season, then

Without arriving at the spring -
And all materiality
Occurring in the spring, therefore
Surceases in that season, then

Without arriving at the summer -
All materiality
Occurring in the summer, therefore
Ceases in that season, then

And doesn't reach the rains again -
So therefore it's impermanent
And also painful, and not-self" -
And next, the threefold aspects are

Attributed by means, then, of
The dark and bright halves of the moon -
"For all materiality
Occurring in the dark half, therefore

Ceases there, and doesn't reach
The bright half of the moon, at all -
And all materiality
Occurring in the bright half, therefore

Ceases there, and doesn't reach
The dark half of the moon, at all -
So therefore it's impermanent
And also painful, and not-self" -

And next, the threefold aspects are
Attributed by night and day -
"For all materiality
Occurring in the night, therefore

Surceases there, and doesn't reach
The day, in any way at all -
And all materiality
Occurring in the day, therefore

Surceases there, and doesn't reach
The night, in any way at all -
So therefore it's impermanent
And also painful, and not-self" -

And next, the threefold aspects are
Attributed by splitting up
The day, then, into sixfold parts
Beginning with the morning, thus -

"For all materiality
Occurring in the morning, therefore
Ceases there, and doesn't reach
The noon, in any way at all -

And all materiality
Occurring in the noon, therefore
Surceases in the noon, without
Arriving at the evening -

And all materiality
Occurring in the evening
Surceases in the evening
And doesn't reach the first night watch -

And all materiality
Occurring in the first night watch
Surceases there, and doesn't reach
The middle watch, thereby, at all

And all materiality
Occurring in the middle watch
Surceases there, and doesn't reach
The final watch, thereby, at all

And all materiality
Occurring in the final watch
Surceases there, without arriving
At the morning, once again -

So therefore it's impermanent
And also painful, and not-self" -
And next, the threefold aspects are
Attributed by means, thereby, of

Moving forward, and then *backward*
Looking at, and then *away*
And *bending*, and then *stretching*, thus -
“For all materiality

Occurring in the moving forward
Ceases there, and doesn’t reach
The moving backward, then, at all -
And all materiality

Occurring in the moving backward
Ceases there, and doesn’t reach
The looking at, thereby, at all -
And all materiality

Occurring in the looking at
Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
Averting of the eyes at all -
And all materiality

Occurring in the glance-averting
Ceases there, and doesn’t reach
The bending of the limbs at all -
And all materiality

Occurring in the bending, therefore
Ceases there, and doesn’t reach
The stretching of the limbs at all -
So therefore it’s impermanent

And also painful, and not-self” -
And next, the threefold aspects are
Attributed by means, thereby, of
Splitting up a single footstep

Into six component parts -
So first, there’s *lifting up* the foot
Then *shifting forward*, is the next
And *shifting sideways*, after that

Then *lowering down*, and *placing down*
And then the *fixing down* is when
The foot is pressed upon the ground -
And in the ‘lifting up,’ thereby

The earth and water elements
Are sluggish and subordinate
For thus the other elements
Are strong, and thereby dominant -

And likewise in the ‘shifting forward’
And the ‘shifting sideways,’ too -
And in the ‘lowering down,’ therein
The air and fire elements

Are sluggish and subordinate
While, thus, the other elements
Are strong, and thereby dominant -
And likewise in the ‘placing down’

And also in the ‘fixing down’ -
And next, the threefold aspects are
Attributed accordingly
By means, then, of these sixfold parts -

“The fourfold elements, and thus
Derived materiality
Occurring in the lifting up
Surcease therein, and do not reach

The shifting forward, thus, at all -
And likewise, those occurring in
The shifting forward, do not reach
The shifting sideways, thus, at all -

And likewise, those occurring in
The shifting sideways, do not reach
The lowering down, thereby, at all -
And likewise, those occurring in

The lowering down, then, do not reach
The placing down, thereby, at all -
And likewise, those occurring in
The placing down, then, do not reach

The fixing down, therefore, at all -
Formations, thus, keep breaking up
Like kernels crackling in a pan -
Wherever, thereby, they arise

Then it is there that they surcease
Proceeding through the stages, and
The sections and the terms, therein
And never reaching later parts -

So therefore they're impermanent
And also painful, and not-self" -
And so it is that comprehension
Of formations, therein, by

Attributing the threefold aspects
To materiality
Increases in its subtlety
For which there is a simile -

A border dweller, thus, it seems
Who knew of flares of wood and grass
And yet had never seen a lamp
Proceeded into town one day

And when she saw a lamplight burning
In a fair, she asked someone -
"What is that lovely item called?"
To which the person, then, replied -

"That thing is known, then, as a lamp
But where it goes to, afterwards
When oil and wick have been consumed
Is something that nobody knows" -

And then another person said -
"That answer has been crudely put
For in the wick there are three parts
And as the flame, then, slowly burns

It ceases in each one, before
It reaches, thus, the other parts" -
And yet another person said -
"That answer's also crudely put

For thus the flame, in every inch
In half an inch, and in each thread
And also in each strand, thereby
Will cease before it ever reaches

Any other strand, therein -
And yet the flame cannot appear
Without the presence of a strand" -
Herein, the attribution of

The threefold aspects, therefore, by
One hundred years allotted for
The 'taking up' and 'putting down'
Is like the knowledge stated as -

"But where it goes to, afterwards
When oil and wick have been consumed
Is something that nobody knows" -
And then the attribution of

The aspects, then, accordingly
In which one hundred years is, thereby
Split up in a threefold stage
Is like the knowledge stated as -

"Within the wick there are three parts
And as the flame, then, slowly burns
It ceases in each one, before
It reaches, thus, the other parts" -

And then the attribution, thus
In which one hundred years is, thereby
Split up into ten and five
And four and three, and two, and one

Is like the knowledge stated as -
"For thus the flame, in every inch
Will cease before it ever reaches
Any other part within" -

And then the attribution, thus
In which a year is split into
The four and two-month periods
According to the season, thus

Is like the knowledge stated as -
"The flame in every half-inch, then
Will cease before it ever reaches
Any other part within" -

And then the attribution, thus
Delimited by means, then, of
The dark and bright halves of the moon
By means of night and day, as well

And also, then, by splitting up
The night and day in sixfold parts
Is like the knowledge stated as -
“The flame in every thread, therein

Will cease before it ever reaches
Any other part within” -
And then the attribution, thus
Delimited by means, thereby, of

Splitting up a single footstep
Into six component parts
Is like the knowledge stated as -
“The flame in every strand, therein

Will cease before it ever reaches
Any other part within” -
So once she has attributed
The aspects, thus, according to

‘The vanishing of what grows old
In each and every stage of life’
Then next, the sister analyses
The materiality

Arising, thus, *from nutriment*
Which is, therefore, made evident
Through hunger and its satisfaction -
Such materiality

That rises due to hunger, then
Is thereby parched and stale, therein
And ugly and disfigured as
A withered stump, or as a crow

That’s perching in a charcoal pit -
And such materiality
When hunger has been satisfied
Is plump and tender, fresh and smooth

And thereby soft to touch, as well
And thus the aspects are applied -
“For all materiality
Occurring in the satisfaction

Ceases there, and doesn’t reach
The time when one is hungry, then -
And all materiality
Occurring at the time of hunger

Ceases there, and doesn’t reach
The time of satisfaction, then -
So therefore it’s impermanent
And also painful, and not-self” -

And then materiality
Arising, thus, *from temperature*
Is that which is made evident
Through coolness, thus, and heat, therein -

For such materiality
Arising due to heat, thereby
Is parched, and stale, and ugly, too -
And so materiality

Arising due to coolness, then
Is plump and tender, fresh and smooth
And thereby soft to touch, as well
And thus the aspects are applied -

“For all materiality
Occurring when it’s hot, thereby
Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
The time when it is cool, therein -

And all materiality
Occurring when it’s cool, thereby
Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
The time when it is hot, therein -

So therefore it’s impermanent
And also painful, and not-self” -
And then materiality
Arising from the karma-born

Is that which is made evident
By means, then, of the sixfold doors
Which is the base for consciousness -
As thus the aspects are applied -

“For all materiality
Occurring in the eye door, then
Surceases there, without arriving
At the ear door, thus, at all -

And all materiality
Occurring in the ear door, then
Surceases there, without arriving
At the nose door, thus, at all -

And all materiality
Occurring in the nose door, then
Surceases there, without arriving
At the tongue door, thus, at all -

And all materiality
Occurring in the tongue door, then
Surceases there, without arriving
At the body door at all -

And all materiality
Occurring in the body door
Surceases there, without arriving
At the mind door, thus, at all -

So therefore it’s impermanent
And also painful, and not-self” -
And then materiality
That’s *consciousness-originated*

Manifests through actions, then
Of one who’s joyful or is grieved -
For such materiality
Arisen in a time of joy

Is smooth and fresh, and also tender
And thus soft to touch, as well -
And such materiality
Arisen in a time of grief

Is parched, and stale, and ugly, too -
And thus the aspects are applied -
“For all materiality
Occurring, then, when one is joyful

Ceases there, and doesn’t reach
The time, therefore, when one is grieved -
And all materiality
Occurring, then, when one is grieved

Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
The time, therefore, when one is joyful -
Therefore it’s impermanent
And also painful, and not-self -

For that which ceases is not lasting
What’s impermanent is painful
And what’s painful is not self” -
And thus, materiality

Is ceasing every moment, then
Before arriving at the next -
From lifespans, to the seasons, and
To night and day as well, and in

Our footsteps on the ground, and in
The flame that burns inside a lamp -
Thus, all will cease before they reach
The points in time that they precede -

“So life, a person, pleasure, pain
Are joined in one brief conscious moment
Gods may live for many aeons
Yet two moments aren’t the same

The dead and living are alike
Their aggregates will not return
And those that break up, now or later
Are no different from before

No world is born, if mind is not
When that is present, then it lives
When mind dissolves, the world is dead
The highest insight, this permits

No states in store, no future stock
For every single being born
Their breakup is foredoomed at birth -
Those in the present, decompose

Unmingled with those in the past
They thus appear from out of nowhere
Break up, and then nowhere go
Like sculptures melting in the snow" [Nd] -

So, having thus attributed
The threefold aspects, rising thus
From nutriment, and temperature
The karma-born, and consciousness

The sister, therefore, should apply them
Once again, to *natural*
Materiality, therein -
And this materiality

Is that which is external, then
And not bound up with faculties
And rising at the same time as
The aeon, thus, of world expansion -

Iron, copper, tin, and lead
And gold and silver, pearl and gem
And beryl, conch, and marble, too
And coral, ruby, opal, soil

And creeper, rock, and grass, and tree -
Thus all of this, and so much more
Is thereby, then, made evident
By means of an asoka-root -

For that, to start with, is pale pink
But in three days, it turns to red
In three more days, it's pale red
Then next it's brown, and then the colour

Of a tender mango shoot
Then after that, it is the colour
Of a growing shoot, and then
It is the colour of pale leaves

And then the tint of dark green leaves -
And as it follows out the stages
Of this continuity
It turns to withered foliage

And at the ending of the year
It disengages from its stem
And to the earth, it then descends -
And thus the aspects are applied -

“For all materiality
Occurring when it’s pale pink
Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
The time, therefore, when it is red -

And all materiality
Occurring, then, when it is red
Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
The time when it is pale red -

And all materiality
Occurring when it’s pale red
Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
The colour of a mango shoot -

And all materiality
Occurring in the time when it’s
The colour of a mango shoot
Surceases there, and doesn’t reach

The colour of a growing shoot -
And all materiality
Occurring in the time when it’s
The colour of a growing shoot

Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
The colour of the pale leaves -
And all materiality
Occurring in the time when it’s

The colour of the pale leaves
Surceases there, and doesn’t reach
The colour of the dark green leaves -
And neither does it thereby reach

Its time as withered foliage, then
Nor the time of breaking loose
And falling down upon the earth -
So therefore it's impermanent

And also painful, and not-self" -
So this is how the threefold aspects
Are applied to natural
Materiality, therein -

Now, when a sister thus discerns
The formed and formless in this way
She sees there is no living being
Above the formed and formless, then

And so perception of a being
Within her mind, is thus removed -
And when her consciousness discerns
Formations with no being there

Then false perceptions don't arise
And when such views do not arise
Then false perception is removed -
And when her consciousness discerns

Formations without false perception
Then conceit will not arise
And when conceit does not arise
Conceit is said to be abolished -

When her consciousness discerns
Formations, thus, with no conceit
Then craving won't arise in her
When craving, thus, does not arise

Attachment, therefore, is removed -
"False views remain in one who thinks
'I see with insight, my insight'
But none exist in one who knows

'Formations only see formations
And discern them, using insight' -
There's conceit in one who thinks
'I see completely with insight' -

But none exists in one who knows
‘Formations only see formations
And discern them, using insight’’ -
There is grasping when one thinks

‘I have the gift of insight now’
But none exists in one who knows
‘Formations only see formations
And discern them, using insight’’ -

If formations were the self
Then they should thus be seen as self
Yet being, thus, without a self
They are still taken as the self

But they are not-self, in the sense
Of being out of our control
And thus impermanent, because
Of non-existence once arisen

And they’re painful, too, because
They are oppressed by rise and fall -
And if formations were, then, lasting
They should thus be seen as lasting

And yet, though impermanent
They’re taken as if permanent
But they’re impermanent, because
Of non-existence, once arisen

And they’re painful, thus, because
They are oppressed by rise and fall
And they are not-self in the sense
Of being out of our control -

And if formations were, then, pleasant
They should thus be seen as pleasant
And yet, though they’re full of pain
They are still taken as if pleasant

Thus, they’re painful, then, because
They are oppressed by rise and fall
And they’re impermanent, because
Of non-existence once arisen

And they're not-self in the sense
Of being out of our control -
Who sees formations as not-self
Will thus eradicate wrong view

And one who sees them as not lasting
Will abolish her conceit
And one who sees them all as painful
Will, therefore, remove attachment" -

Now familiar with these subjects
And now knowing sections of
The eighteenfold essential insights
Nuns abandon that which is

In opposition to their view -
These insights, therein, are as follows -
One who knows impermanence
Abandons views of permanence

And knowing pain's pervasiveness
She then discards all views of pleasure
And with knowledge of not-self
She thus abandons views of self -

Through contemplation of dispassion
She abandons all delighting
And through knowing fading off
She thus relinquishes her greed

And understanding, then, cessation
She discards origination
Knowing, thus, relinquishment
She then abandons all her grasping -

Contemplation of destruction
Leads to the abandonment
Of the perception of compactness -
One who knows formations' fall

Discards accumulating karma
And through understanding change
She gives up views of constancy -
Through contemplation of the signless

She discards formations as
Existences that can be grasped
And knowing the desireless
She thus abandons all desire -

Through contemplation, then, of voidness
She discards confusion from
Insistence on a lasting self -
Through insight into higher states

She then discards confusion, which is
Due to grasping at a core
And one who thus develops knowledge
And pure vision of the way

Abandons misinterpreting
And thus insistence on confusion -
Through her knowledge of the danger
Of becoming and the rest

She then discards the craving, which is
Thus dependent on reliance -
Contemplation of reflection
Leads to the abandonment

Of ignorance from non-reflection
On impermanence and more
Through knowing how to turn away
Which is an equanimity

About formations and the truth -
For due to this the mind retreats
From all formations in the round
Like water on a lotus leaf -

Then she discards confusion, which is
Due to bondage in the round -
Thus far the nun has seen formations
Through respective aspects of

Impermanence and pain and not-self -
Furthermore, impermanence
And contemplation of the signless
Are the same in meaning, and

Thus different only in the letter
So is knowledge, then, of pain
And knowing the desireless
And so too also, therefore, are

The contemplation of not-self
And contemplation, thus, of voidness -
Through these contemplations, then
The rest are also thus established -

Having thus abandoned these
The meditator should embark on
Contemplating rise and fall, then
Through the change of present states -

“For present form is, therefore, born
The aspect of its birth is ‘rise’
The aspect of its change is ‘fall’
This contemplation, thus, is knowledge

Present feeling is, thus, born
The aspect of its birth is ‘rise’
The aspect of its change is ‘fall’
This contemplation, thus, is knowledge

And the same then for perception
And formations, consciousness
The sixfold base, and all the rest -
For in the present, they are born

The aspect of their birth is ‘rise’
The aspect of their change is ‘fall’
This contemplation, thus, is knowledge” [Ps] -
One then sees the aspects here

Of generation, birth, arising
And renewal, thus, as ‘rise’
And then the other aspects of
Destruction, change and dissolution

Therefore, as the ‘fall,’ and so -
“No unarisen name-and-form
Is stored, therefore, before it rises
Rising thus, it does not come

From any prior heap or store
And ceasing then, it does not go
In any bearing or direction -
There is nowhere any storage

Heap, or hoard, of what has ceased
For, just as when a lute is played
The sound that rises does not come
From any store, when it arises

Neither is it then transported
To a place, where it then ceases
Thus instead, not having been
It's manifested owing to

The lute, its neck, the player's work
And having been, it vanishes
And so too, all the states, therefore
Not having been, come into being

Having been, they disappear"[s] -
And so formations should appear
As thus, perpetually renewed -
"Though unarisen, states arise

And once arisen then they cease" -
So in this way, not only are they
Ceaselessly renewed, therefore
But they are also transient

Like dew-drops in the morning, or
A bubble on the water, or
A line drawn in the sand, or thus
The beads of sweat upon a hand

And thus they have no core, just like
A magic trick, or a mirage
The whirling of a fire stick
A plantain trunk, and froth, and so on -

"When a sister's mind is quiet
And she's settled in a place
Where deepest insight in the Dharma
Gives her such sublime delight

It’s thus because she comprehends
The rise and fall of aggregates
She reaches joy and happiness
And knows it to be deathlessness” -

And yet a sister should beware
Of imperfections, thus, of insight
Which arise in meditation
Such as when she brings to mind

Formations as impermanent
And insight starts to rise in her, and
She begins, therefore, to think that
“Insight is a state of Buddhas” -

From that comes distraction, which
Is restlessness and agitation -
When her mind is seized by that
She doesn’t comprehend it as

Impermanent, or painful, or
As thus, devoid of any self
And likewise, when she brings to mind
Formations as impermanent

And knowledge starts to rise in her, and
She begins, therefore, to think that
“Knowledge is a state of Buddhas” -
From that comes distraction, which

Is restlessness and agitation -
When her mind is seized by that
She doesn’t comprehend it as
Impermanent, or painful, or

As thus, devoid of any self -
The same applies to happiness
Tranquillity, and bliss, and so on
When they, thus, arise in her, and

She begins, therefore, to think -
“Illumination such as this
Did not arise in me before
So I have surely reached the path

And I have surely gained the fruit" -
To see what's not the path as path
And what is not the fruit as fruit
Will mean a meditator finds

Her insight, then, is interrupted -
So with other imperfections
That arise in meditation -
Resolution, happiness

Tranquillity, and bliss, and so on -
Owing to their influence
Unwary meditators waver
Seeing imperfections, then

As "this is I, and mine, my self" **M**
They're flustered by illumination
Knowledge, bliss, and all the rest
As thus, the Ancient Ones have said -

"She wavers with illumination
Knowledge, happiness, and bliss
She wavers with tranquillity
And, thus, her mind becomes confused

She wavers, too, with resolution
Effort, and assurance, then
And equanimity, as well
And sees them all, therefore, as self" **Ps** -

A skillful meditator, though
Who is discreet, examines it
With deeper understanding, thus -
"Illumination has arisen

That's impermanent and formed
And thus conditioned, and is subject
To destruction, and to fall
To fading off, and, thus, cessation

If it, therefore, were the self
It should be taken as the self
But being, thus, without a self
It is still taken as the self

So it is not-self in the sense
Of being out of my control
And thus impermanent, because
Of non-existence once arisen

And it's agony because
It is oppressed by rise and fall" -
And just as with illumination
So too, then, with all the rest -

And having thus investigated
Then she sees illumination
As "not I, not mine, not self"
For as the Ancient Ones have said -

"So when a nun of understanding
Has examined all these aspects
And is skilled in agitation
In the states of meditation

With this view, she doesn't waver
Nor is prone to vacillation
And no more will she fall prey, then
To distractions in her way" [Ps] -

As she unravels, thus, the skein
Of imperfections filled with pain
One-pointedly, she ascertains
What is, and what is not, the way -

"The states, thus, of illumination
Knowledge, bliss, and exaltation
Cannot, thus, be called the path -
It's insight knowledge, free from flaws

That keeps its course, which is the path" -
The knowledge thus established, then
By the emergence, therein, of
This truth and understanding, as

"This is, and this is not, the path"
Should then be comprehended as
The purity, through knowledge of
What is, and what is not, the path

17 – Purification by Knowledge and Vision of the Way

Now, ‘purity through knowledge and
Pure vision of the way,’ then, is
When insight reaches culmination
In conformity with truth

And those who would accomplish this
Should first apply themselves, then, to
Perceptiveness of rise and fall
Which is devoid of imperfections -

Why does one again pursue
The insight into rise and fall?
To thus observe the threefold aspects
Once they’re free from imperfections

For when insight’s not applied
They don’t become discernible
Because it means that then they are
Kept under wraps by something else -

For when attention’s not applied
To unremitting rise and fall
The aspect of impermanence
Is not, thereby, discernible

Because it is therefore concealed
By seeming continuity -
And pain is not discernible
When one’s attention’s not applied

To looped oppression, as it is
Concealed by postures thus adopted -
Selflessness, in aspect, too
Does not become discernible

For when attention’s not applied
To resolution down into
The individual elements
Then selflessness is thus concealed

By an illusory compactness
Built up by the elements -
When continuity is broken
By analysis of rise and fall

The aspect of impermanence
Becomes discernibly apparent
In its pure nature, thus
For continuity's uncovered

As the otherness of states
That are occurring in succession
So, through disconnectedness
Impermanence becomes apparent -

When the postures are exposed
By focus on repeat oppression
Pain becomes discernible, thus
In its pure prevailing form

For pain in postures is manoeuvred
By the next one that's adopted
Which conceals the prior one
So once this is correctly known

Then pain's concealment is exposed -
And when compactness is, therefore
Resolved into its elements
Of earth, and water, and so on

Or contact, feeling, and the rest
Then selflessness becomes apparent
Clearly, in its pure nature
As the Ancient Ones have said -

"Thus having been, it is now not
So therefore it's impermanent
The reasons for this are fourfold
First, as a state of rise and fall

Then as a state of change, and thirdly
One of temporariness
And then denying permanence -
It is the mode, then, of oppression

So it's thus imbued with pain
The reasons for this are fourfold -
It's painful in the sense of burning
And of being hard to bear

Of being, too, the base for pain
And thus opposing pleasure, too -
No power over it is held
So therefore it is selflessness

The reasons for this are fourfold -
First, in the sense of voidness, and
Of having, thus, no owner-master
And no Overlord, as well

And also, then, opposing self[M] -
Impermanence is obvious
As when a saucer falls and breaks
And pain is also obvious

As when a throbbing boil appears
Yet not-self's not so obvious
For whether Buddhas rise or not
The aspects of impermanence

And pain will nonetheless be known
But if no Buddha then arises
Aspects, thus, of selflessness
Are not revealed or then made known" [Vbh] -

The fivefold aggregates are, then
Impermanent, thus, owing to
Their rise and fall, and how they change
And non-existence after rising

They are also full of pain
Because they are impermanent
And subject to oppression, too
And so this aspect is their mode -

The aggregates are selfless, too
For what is painful is not-self
And thus there is no exercising
Of one's power over them -

The meditator thus examines
All this in its pure nature
Knowing, then, the rise and fall
With insight free, and steady course

Examining repeatedly
Thus, both the form and formless states
To see they are impermanent
And painful, and devoid of self

For when her mind is sharp and keen
Formations will be fully seen
And so no longer she extends
Her mindfulness to their arising

Or their presence, or occurrence
But she focusses instead
And brings her mind, therefore, to bear
On their destruction, fall, and breakup -

How can this be known as insight?
Consciousness that, therefore, has
Materiality as object
Rises up, and then dissolves

So having focussed on that object
Then she contemplates, therein
The very dissolution of
The consciousness that got her there -

So how, then, does she contemplate?
She sees it as impermanent
And therefore, not as permanent
She contemplates as painful, too

And therefore not as pleasant, and
She contemplates as not-self, too
And therefore void of any self
She thus becomes dispassionate

Without delight, and so she causes
Fading off, therefore, of greed
Without inflaming, and so she
Brings on cessation, not becoming

Letting go, she does not grasp -
With all things as impermanent
Thus in her sight, she then discards
The view she has of permanence

With all things full of agony
Thus in her sight, she then discards
The view she has of pleasure, and
With everything as selfless, then

Within her sight, she then discards
Her cognisance of self, and so
Becoming, thus, dispassionate
She then discards delight, and when

Her greed then fades away, she thus
Abandons greed, and therefore with
The causing of cessation, she
Discards originating, then

Relinquishing, she gives up grasping
After seeing dissolution
Of materiality -
And then there is perception of

The dissolution of the mind
By which the object had been seen
Through substitution of the object -
So she moves away from rise

And thereby focuses on fall
And so, by inference and induction
From her own experience
She knows the seen and unseen, then

As having just a single essence -
“This assemblage of formations
Has dissolved, thus, in the past
And it will break up in the future

As it does here in the present” -
As the Ancient Ones have said -
“And with her vision of all dharmas
In the present, purified

She then infers that all those dharmas
Past and future are alike
And she infers that all formations
Have to fade and disappear

Like the dew-drops out in nature
When the morning sun appears" -
And so, intent upon cessation
Having seen the dissolution

Of the object and the mind
This knowledge, thus, can make formations
Crumble in disintegration -
"Thus, it is formations only

That dissolve and dissipate
Their dissolution, then, is death
There is no self apart from that" -
For as the Ancient Ones have said -

"As someone then, who drills a gem
Will just observe, and keep in mind
The hole she drills, and not the gem
So too, the meditator, therefore

Only keeps in mind the ceaseless
Dissolution of formations
Not formations, thus, themselves
For aggregates are always ceasing

Nothing else, therein, exists -
The breakup of the aggregates
Is, therefore, what is known as death
And so she watches them dissolve

As one who drills a shining gem" -
When she no longer vacillates
In knowing, then, that the unceased
Will have to cease, and so therefore

The undissolved will thus dissolve
She disregards, then, the arising
And the presence, and occurrence
And the sign of all formations

Which are always breaking up
Just like ceramics being smashed
And like fine dust that is dispersed
And like the kernels that are roasted

Just their breaking-up, she sees
And like someone who's standing on
The bank of river, or of pond
Amidst a driving drop of rain

Would see large bubbles, thus, appearing
On the surface of the water
And then breaking up directly
Likewise, then she sees formations

Breaking up repeatedly
For as the Blessed One has said -
"And she who looks upon the world
As one who looks upon a bubble

And thus sees a fantasy
Is out of sight of Death, the King" [Dh] -
For when she sees repeatedly
That all formations are, therefore

Collapsing, then, continuously
The mindfulness of dissolution
Burgeons ever strong in her
Enhancing eight advantages -

To lose false notions of becoming
Is the first, and after that
Relinquishing fidelity
To life comes next, and then there is

Her constant application, and
A pure livelihood, as well as
Abrogated worry, and
An absence, then, of fear, and thus

Accomplishment of patience, too
With gentleness, and then there is
The conquering, therein, of both
Aversion and mundane delight -

As she repeats and cultivates
This mindfulness of dissolution
With its object of cessation
As consisting, therefore, in

Destruction, fall, and breaking up
Of all formations, then they will
Appear to her according to
Becoming, generation, or

Abode, or fate, or station, thus
As beings in the form, then, of
Great terror, such as lions, tigers
Leopards, bears, hyenas, spirits

Ogres, bulls, or savage dogs
And elephants, or deadly snakes
And thunderbolts, or charnel grounds
And battlefields, and many more -

They manifest before the nun
Who only wants to live in peace
For when she penetrates, therein
How past formations are deceased

And present ones are ceasing, too
And future ones will also cease
Then understanding that is labelled
‘Knowledge of appearance as

Great terror’ will arise in her
So here, then, is a simile -
The three sons of a woman had
Committed acts against the king

And so the king, then, ordered that
The sons should have their heads cut off -
The eldest was decapitated
Then it was the middle son

Who was the next in line, so then
She gave up hoping for the youngest
When she clearly realised, that
“He will also fare like them” -

And so the meditator, who
Can see the end of past formations
Is just like the woman seeing
How her eldest son, then, was

Decapitated, first in line -
The meditator seeing, then
Formations ceasing in the present
Is just like her witnessing

The middle son decapitated -
And her seeing the cessation
Of formations in the future
Parallels her giving up

On longing for her youngest son
And knowing “he will fare like them” -
And when she sees this way, therefore
The knowledge of appearance as

Great terror, thus, arises in her
Yet the knowledge of appearance
As great terror does not fear
For it is just the judgement, then

That past formations have surceased
The present ones are ceasing now
And future ones will also cease -
Just as someone who’s looking at

Deep charcoal pits at city gates
Is not herself imbued with fear
And only forms the judgement, then
That falling in would cause great pain

Or as someone who’s looking at
A row of spikes of wood and steel
Is not herself imbued with fear
And only forms the judgement, then

That falling on them causes torment -
So too, then, the knowledge of
Appearance as great terror, thus
Does not itself experience fear

It only forms the judgement, then
That in all aspects of becoming
Which resemble pits and spikes
The past formations have all ceased

The present ones are ceasing now
And future ones will also cease -
But it will still ‘appear as terror’
Therefore, just because formations

Thus, in all kinds of becoming
Generation or abode
Or fate or station, thus, as well
Are hideous in being bound

For termination, and therefore
Appear only as a terror -
When impermanence is seen
The sign, therefore, appears to her

As visions of the greatest terror
Where ‘the sign’ is thus a term
For the formations, thus, themselves
From present, past, and future, too -

For when impermanence is seen
She brings them to her mind and pictures
Just the death of the formations
And when painfulness is seen

Occurrence of formations, thus
Appears to her as abject terror -
All she sees is looped oppression
Precedently seen as pleasure -

When she brings them to her mind
As not-self, both occurrence and
The sign, will then appear as terror
As she sees them both as void

And with no power, or a guide
An empty village, a mirage
A goblin city, and so on -
So not-self, too, appears as terror -

When she thereby cultivates
The knowledge of appearance as
Great terror, there is no asylum
Or a place where she can go

No refuge, thus, in all kinds of
Becoming, generation, or
Abode, or fate, or station, since
There's nothing she can place her hopes on

Nothing she can cling to, so
Becoming then appears to her
Like charcoal pits of glowing coals
The elements like lethal snakes

The aggregates like murderers
The six internal bases like
An empty town, and outer ones
Like village-raiding pillagers

And consciousness a burning, blazing
Glowing conflagration, as
Formations thus appear, then, as
A massive group of dangers, which

Are destitute of satisfaction
With no substance, like a tumour
A disease, calamity
A dart, and also an affliction -

And so how do they appear?
As a thicket in a forest
Seeming pleasant, but infested
With a horde of wild beasts

A cave of tigers, water haunted
Thus, by monsters and by ogres
Enemies with wielded swords
A group of robbers, poisoned food

And fiery pits of charcoal flames
A battlefield with rival armies -
All appear, thus, to the nun
Who only wants to live in peace -

And as that nun is terrified
When, thus, she comes upon a thicket
Full of angry beasts and peril
And she sees there, only danger

When formations have appeared
As abject terror, thereby, through
The mindfulness of dissolution
Then the nun will see them all

As utterly denuded, thus
Of any core or satisfaction
And as nothing but a danger -
How is it that understanding

Of appearance as a terror, is
The knowledge, thus, of danger?
Understanding of appearance
As a terror is, therefore -

‘Arising is a terror,’ is
A knowledge, thus, of danger, and
‘Occurrence is a terror’ is
A knowledge, thus, of danger, and

‘The sign is, thus, a terror’ is
A knowledge, then, of danger
‘Accumulation is a terror’
Is a knowledge, too, of danger

‘Rebirth-linking is a terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger
And so ‘destiny is terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger

‘Generation is a terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger
‘Re-arising is a terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger

And then ‘birth is also terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger
And so ‘ageing is a terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger

And then ‘sickness is a terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger
And so ‘death is also terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger

And then ‘sorrow is a terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger -
‘Lamentation is a terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger

And ‘despair is also terror’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger -
“Only suffering comes to be
For suffering stands and falls away

There’s nothing else that comes to be
And nothing else that falls away” -
So therefore cognisance of peace is
‘Non-arising is a safety’

And the cognisance of peace is
‘Non-occurrence is a safety’
And the cognisance of peace is
Therefore, ‘signlessness is safety’

Knowing peace is, therefore
‘Non-accumulation is a safety’ -
This continues ‘til we get to
‘Non-despair is, thus, a safety’ -

Understanding of appearance
As a terror, also is -
‘Arising is a suffering,’ is
A knowledge, then, of danger, and

‘Occurrence is a suffering’ is
A knowledge, then, of danger, and
‘The sign is, thus, a suffering’ is
A knowledge, then, of danger

‘Accumulation is a suffering’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger -
So it goes, until we have
‘Despair is also, thus, a suffering’

Is a knowledge, then, of danger -
So the cognisance of peace is
‘Non-arising, thus, is bliss,’ and
And so the cognisance of peace is

‘Non-occurrence, thus, is bliss’
And then the cognisance of peace
Is therefore, ‘signlessness is bliss’
And knowing peace is, therefore

‘Non-accumulation is a bliss’ -
And this continues ‘til we get to
‘Non-despair is, therefore, bliss’ -
Then understanding of appearance

As a terror, also is -
‘Arising is formations,’ is
A knowledge, then, of danger, and
‘Occurrence is formations’ is

A knowledge, then, of danger, and
‘The sign is, thus, formations’ is
A knowledge, then, of danger
‘Accumulation is formations’

Is a knowledge, then, of danger -
This continues ‘til we get to
‘And despair is thus formations’
Is a knowledge, then, of danger -

So the cognisance of peace
Is ‘non-arising is Nirvana’
And the cognisance of peace
Is ‘non-occurrence is Nirvana’ -

And the cognisance of peace
Is ‘signlessness is, thus, Nirvana’
Knowing peace is, therefore
‘Non-accumulation is Nirvana’ -

This continues ‘til we get to
‘Non-despair is, thus, Nirvana’ -
“Contemplating suffering as
Arising and occurrence, and

The sign, accumulation, and then
Rebirth-linking, one will know
One’s cognisance is thus of danger -
Contemplating as Nirvana

Non-arising, non-occurrence
Signlessness, and therefore also
Non-accumulation, and
A lack of rebirth-linking, then

One's cognisance is thus of peace -
This knowledge, then, of danger has
Five sources for its origin
And five as well for peace, and so

Ten knowledges one understands -
Thus, skilled in these two kinds of knowledge
Nuns will thereby find themselves
Not shaken up or stirred by views" -

Herein, 'arising' is appearance
Here in this becoming, then
With previous karma as condition
And 'occurrence,' then, the instance

Of what's risen in this way
'The sign' is that of all formations
And 'accumulation' is
The karma that is, then, the cause

Of future rebirth-linking, and
Then 'destiny' will be the fate
Where rebirth-linking, thus, takes place
And also 'generation' is

Creation of the aggregates
And 're-arising' is attainment
Of a rebirth via karma -
'Birth' has *being* as condition -

Also labelled as *becoming* -
And it's the contingency
For ageing, sickness, death, and so on
Only five are mentioned, thus

Because the objects danger has
Are synonyms for all the rest -
So, 'birth' and 'generation,' thus
For 'rebirth-linking' and 'arising'

‘Destiny’ and re-arising’
Are then synonyms, thus, for
‘Occurrence’ - and ‘the sign’ is then
A synonym for ageing-death -

So when one sees formations, as
The greatest peril in this way
Then one becomes dispassionate
Dissatisfied, and sees no joy

In manifold formations, thus
Belonging to all aspects of
Becoming, or of destiny
Or station, or abode of beings -

“Thus it is that understanding
Of appearance as a terror
Knowledge of the danger, and
Then knowledge of dispassion, are

All one in meaning and the same
And only different in the letter” [Ps] -
Due to knowledge of dispassion
When a meditator, thereby

Finds herself dispassionate
Dissatisfied, and sees no joy
In manifold formations, thus
Belonging to all classes of

Becoming, or of destiny
Or station, or abode of beings
She then becomes desirous of
Complete release from all formations

And aspires to escape -
So what is this desire like?
Just as a fish trapped in a net
A frog caught in a reptile’s jaws

A jungle fowl shut in a cage
A deer trapped in the strongest snare
A snake held captive by a charmer
Elephants stuck in a bog

A woman circled by her foes -
Just as they wish to be delivered
And escape from all these things
So too, this meditator's mind

Develops longing for deliverance
From the prison of formations
And attainment of escape -
Then, when no longer she relies

Upon the disparate formations
And still yearning for departure
From those manifold formations
A desire for deliverance

As a knowledge, then arises -
Thus, ambitious for withdrawal
From the manifold formations
In the many classes of

Becoming, generation, or
Abode, or fate, or station, then
She thus discerns those same formations
Through the attribution of

The threefold aspects, therefore, by
The contemplation of reflection -
First, she sees formations as
Impermanent, therein, because

They're interim, and don't continue
And thus limited, therefore
By rise and fall, disintegrating
Fickle, too, and unenduring

Perishing, and ruled by change
And due to be annihilated
Coreless, formed, and prone to death -
She sees them all as painful, too

For they are endlessly oppressed
And hard to bear, the base of pain -
Diseases, tumours, and a dart
Calamities, and an affliction

Terror, plagues, and a disaster -
Having no protection, and
No shelter, and no refuge, thus
A menace, and a danger, too

And murderous, and prone to cankers
Māra's bait, enslaved by birth
And ageing, illness, lamentation
Sorrow, and defilement, too -

She sees them all as foul, as well
Because they are repulsive, and
Disgusting, smelly, loathsome, too
And unaffected by disguise

She sees them all as selfless, and
As alien and empty, for
They're vain, and void, and ownerless
And thus without an Overlord

And there is nothing that has power
Over any one of them
So this discernment of formations
Is the attribution of

The threefold aspects, in this way -
But why does she discern this way?
In order, therefore, to contrive
The means to her deliverance

For when she brings them to her mind
As utterly impermanent
Then knowledge will arise in her
From her reflecting on the sign

And when she brings them to her mind
As singularly full of pain
Then knowledge will arise in her
From her reflecting on occurrence -

When she brings them to her mind
As totally devoid of self
Then knowledge will arise in her
From her reflecting, therefore, on

The sign, and thus occurrence, too -
“She looks upon the world as void
This meditator, always mindful
And escapes the clutch of death

By giving up belief in self
For Death, the King, can’t see the nun
Who looks this way upon the world” [Sn] -
And when she has discerned formations

Through the attribution of
The threefold aspects, in this way
She sees them as devoid, thereby
Discarding terror and delight

And consequently she displays
Indifference and neutrality -
For her, there is no ‘I’ or ‘mine’
Like one who has divorced her husband

Finds herself, then, to be free -
Suppose a woman’s married to
A handsome, charming man, and is
So deep in love, she cannot suffer

Separation for a moment
So she’s angry and unhappy
Any time when she observes him
Standing, sitting, laughing, or

Conversing with another woman -
Later, when she knows his faults
And thus decides to separate
Once they’re divorced, thereafter, she

No more considers him as ‘mine’
And whensoever then she sees him
Spending time with someone else
She finds she’s not disturbed, or angry

But, instead, is calm and neutral -
So too, then, this meditator
Wanting freedom from formations
Thus, discerns and penetrates them

By her deep investigation
Seeing nothing thus, therein
That could be viewed as ‘I’ or ‘mine’ -
Discarding terror and delight

She consequently, then, displays
Indifference and neutrality
And when she knows and sees this way
Her heart retreats, retracts, recoils

From all the different classes of
Becoming, generation, or
Abodes of beings in the round
And thus no longer goes to them -

For just as water-drops retreat
And pull back on a lotus leaf
And thereby then do not spread out
So too, her heart retracts, retreats

And shrinks from all the different classes
Of becoming, generation
Or abodes of beings, and
No longer, thus, goes out to them -

Just as a chicken’s feather, or
A shred of sinew on a fire
Retracts, retreats, and shrinks therefrom
And doesn’t spread itself, as well

So too, her heart retracts, retreats
And shrinks from all the different classes
Of becoming, generation
Or abodes of beings, and

No more extends itself to them
And from this, then, there rises, therefore
What is labelled as the ‘knowledge
Thus, of equanimity

About the rising of formations’ -
If this knowledge sees Nirvana
As a state of peace and freedom
It dismisses all formations

And it enters, then, directly
To the state known as Nirvana -
If it doesn't see Nirvana
As accord, it keeps returning

And occurring with formations
At the forefront as its object
Like the so-called *sailors' crow* -
"When traders board a ship, it seems

They take with them, then, what is called
A 'land-divining crow,' and when
The vessel is blown off its course
And thereby runs adrift, they then

Release the land-divining crow
Which flies directly from the mast-head -
After searching all the quarters
If it thereby sees some land

It flies immediately towards it
If it doesn't, it returns
And sits once more upon the mast-head"[D] -
So too, then, if knowledge, thus

Of equanimity about
The rising of formations sees
Nirvana as a state of peace
It stops formations instantly

And actuates within Nirvana
If it doesn't see Nirvana
As a state of peace, however
Then it keeps occurring, therefore

With formations once again, thus
At the forefront, as its object -
When a nun has analysed
Formations in their many modes

Like sifting flour on a tray
Or carding cotton, once the seeds
Have been picked out, and cleared away
Discarding terror and delight

She nurtures equanimity
Upon the sight of all formations
Yet continues with persistence
In the deepest triple insight

So this knowledge enters in
‘The triple gates to liberation’ -
Entering upon this state
The contemplation actuates

Accordingly, then, in three ways -
“These gateways, then, to liberation
Lead to outlet from the world -
The first is seeing all formations

As a danger and a risk
And limited by rise and fall
And therefore also circumscribed
Routinely by impermanence

And so it leads to entering
Into the signless element
Which is, therefore, completely counter
To the aspects of formations -

Next, is bracing of the mind
By permeating consciousness
With critical exigency, then
Through the pain of all formations

And this leads to consciousness
Thus entering, thereby, into
The element without desire -
The final gateway then leads to

Observance of all things, therein
As alien and selfless, thus
Not ‘I,’ not ‘mine,’ and not ‘my self’
And entering of consciousness

Into the voidness element
Which is unformed, and void of self -
With knowledge of impermanence
Formations, then, are thus destroyed

And seeing them as full of pain
Formations manifest as terror
Seeing them as selfless, then
Formations fall into the void -

These entrances to liberation
Lead to outlet from the world" [Ps] -
And what, then, are the liberations
That these contemplations lead to?

Namely, they are three, therefore -
The signless, the desireless, and
Then thirdly, thus, there is the void -
"When one who has great resolution

Brings to mind impermanence
She gains the signless liberation
Ultimately, as its fruit
When one with great tranquillity

Thus, brings to mind pervasive pain
She gains desireless liberation
Ultimately, as its fruit
When one with wisdom brings to mind

Thereby, the deepest selflessness
She gains the voidness liberation
Ultimately, as its fruit" [Ps] -
So these are, thus, the liberations -

"The desire for deliverance
Is the knowledge of dispassion
And reflection has the purpose
Of a means to that deliverance

And equanimous onlooking
At the end is, thus, composure -
Thus, the yearning for salvation
Contemplation of reflection

Equanimity about
The constant rising of formations -
In their meaning they're the same
And only different in their name" [Ps]

18 – Purification by Knowledge and Vision

Now, ‘purity through knowledge and
Pure vision,’ then, is what consists of
Knowledge of the fourfold paths -
Of stream-entry and once-return

And non-return, and Arhatship -
And each one, then, is furthermore
Divided into two, then, as
Its path and also its fruition -

Herein, then, there’s nothing more
That must be done, thus, to achieve
The goal of the initial path
For knowledge in conformity

Has thus dispelled the muddy murk
That keeps the truths concealed, and so
One’s consciousness no longer enters
Or resolves, or clings or clutches

To formations, thus, at all -
Instead, the mind retracts, retreats
Like water on a lotus leaf
And all occurrences and signs

Appear as an impediment
And at this moment, knowledge in
Conformity dissolves, and then
One’s knowledge changes lineage

And thereupon its object is
The signless, and then non-occurrence
Non-formation and cessation
And then that which is Nirvana -

So this knowledge leaves behind
The lineage of normal people
And it joins the Noble Ones -
This culminating peak of insight

Is, thus, irrevocable -
“It overcomes arising, thus
It is a change-of-lineage
And overcomes occurrence, so

It is a change-of-lineage
It overcomes the sign, so thus
It is a change-of-lineage
Surmounts accumulation, thus

It is a change-of-lineage
It conquers rebirth-linking, so
It is a change-of-lineage
And also destiny, so thus

It is a change-of-lineage
It conquers generation, too
So it's a change-of-lineage
And also re-arising, thus

It is a change-of-lineage
It overpowers birth, so thus
It is a change-of-lineage
And conquers ageing, too, so thus

It is a change-of-lineage
It overpowers sickness, thus
It is a change-of-lineage
And also death and sorrow, so

It is a change-of-lineage
It conquers lamentation, so
It is a change-of-lineage
And overcomes despair, so thus

It is a change-of-lineage
It overcomes formations, too
So it's a change-of-lineage -
It *enters non-arising*, thus

It is a change-of-lineage
And *enters non-occurrence*, so
It is a change-of-lineage" -
And this continues, then, until -

"It *enters non-despair*, so thus
It is a change-of-lineage
And *enters in cessation*, so
It is a change-of-lineage" [Ps] -

To show, then, how conformity
Turns into change-of-lineage
There is, therefore, a simile -
To fling herself across a stream

A woman runs and grabs a rope
That's hanging on the near bank
Or grabs a pole that's lying there
And thereby leaps, with all her body

Leaning, tending and inclining
Thus, towards the other bank -
When she's above the other bank
She lets go, falls, and staggers first

And then is steadied on the ground -
And so this meditator, too
Who wants to enter in Nirvana
Opposite from generation

Destiny, abode and station
Runs, by means of contemplation
Of the rise and fall, and more
And seizing, with conformity's

Adverting to impermanence
And selflessness, and suffering
The rope, materiality
Thus, hanging from the branch of selfhood -

Or she grabs the pole of feeling
Or perception, or formations -
Leaping with conformity
She leans and tends towards Nirvana

Thus approaching to Nirvana
Which is now attainable
She lets go of conformity
And with the change-of-lineage

She falls upon the further shore
The other bank, unformed Nirvana -
First she staggers, yet unsteady
Then she's steadied by the path -

And here's another simile -
A woman, thus, went out at night
In order, then, for her to find
A new conjunction of the stars

At first she tried to find the moon
But it was hidden by the clouds
Yet as she gazed, a sudden wind
Arose and blew away the clouds

And so the woman saw the moon
And the conjunction of the stars -
Herein, the murk that hides the truths
Is like the clouds that coat the sky

Conformity is like the wind
And knowing change-of-lineage
Is like the woman who can see -
Nirvana, then, is like the moon -

Dispelling of the murk that hides
The truths, then, by conformity
Is like dispersal of the clouds
As instigated by the wind -

The vision of Nirvana, then
By knowing change-of-lineage
Thus, when the murk has disappeared
Is like the vision of the moon

Within a sky that's free from clouds -
Just as the wind can blow the clouds
But cannot see the moon therein
So too, therefore, conformity

Dispels the murk that hides the truths
But cannot see Nirvana, thus -
Just as the woman sees the moon
But cannot blow away the clouds

So knowing change-of-lineage
Can only see Nirvana, then
But cannot, thus, dispel afflictions -
Once the change-of-lineage

Has thus ‘adverted to the path’
It gives a sign, so that the path
Can thus come into being, and
Then after that, it thereby ceases -

Without pause, the path appears
Uninterrupted in its flow
And thus it pierces and explodes
The mass of greed, the mass of hate

And also all of the delusion
All of which has never been
Exploded or destroyed before -
So here’s a simile for this -

An archer set a target at
A distance of a hundred yards
Then wrapped a cloth around her face
And placed an arrow in her bow

And stood upon a spinning wheel -
Another woman turned the wheel
And when the target was aligned
Then with a stick, she gave a sign

And without pause, the archer fired
And hit the target with her arrow -
Herein, change-of-lineage
Is like the sign, then, from the stick

The knowledge of the path is like
The archer with her face in cloth
And so the knowledge of the path
That makes Nirvana, then, its object

Without pause, upon the sign
That comes from change-of-lineage
And thus exploding all the greed
The hatred, and the ignorance

Is therefore like the archer, who
Thus hits the target with her arrow
Instantly, upon the sign -
Not only does it cause the piercing

Of the threefold fires, thus
It also dries the sea of suffering
In the endless round of birth
And closes all the doors that lead to

All the states of loss, therein -
It also gives experience
Of all the seven noble treasures -
Faith and virtue, shame and conscience

Learning, generosity
And thereby understanding, too -
And furthermore, it thus discards
Delusions on the eightfold path

Allays all enmity and fear
And leads to acquisition, then
Of many hundred blessings, too -
So this is thereby, then, the knowledge

Of the path of stream-entry -
And from that knowledge, there arises
A fruition consciousness
Immediately, thus, as result

Which is the second noble person -
Though she may be negligent
She’s bound to make an end of suffering
Once she’s travelled and traversed

The round of rebirths in the realms
Of deities and human beings
Another seven times, no more -
When that fruition finishes

Adverting rises in succession
So that she can start reviewing
First, the path, and then fruition
Then defilements thus abandoned

And defilements still remaining -
Lastly, she reviews Nirvana -
As with the stream-enterer
So also with the once-returner

And then with the non-returner
So they must, then, all review -
The Arhat, though, has no reviewing
Of defilements still remaining -

Having thus reviewed this way
The path that leads to stream-entry
This noble one decides to reach
The second plane upon the path

By cutting down on avarice
For sense desires and enmity -
She brings to bear the faculties
And also, then, the powers, too

And factors of enlightenment
Discerning all formations, then
As changing, painful, and not-self
And going through progressive insights -

When there's equanimity
About formations, at the end
Conformity arises, then
Along with change-of-lineage

Thus, in the way described before -
And so the path of once-return
Arises next to change-of-lineage -
This is thereby, then, the knowledge

Of the path of once-return -
And thus fruition follows on
Then, in the same way as before
And at this point, the once-returner

Is the fourth of noble ones
And bound to make an end of pain
Upon returning just once more -
And after that, there comes reviewing

As it was described before -
Now having thus reviewed this way
The path that leads to once-return
This noble one decides to reach

The third attainment on the path
By cutting off, without remainder
Avarice for sense desires
And enmity, therein, as well -

She brings to bear the faculties
And also, then, the powers, too
And factors of enlightenment
Discerning all formations, then

As changing, painful, and not-self
And going through progressive insights -
When there's equanimity
About formations, at the end

Conformity arises, then
Along with change-of-lineage
Thus, in the way described before -
And so the path of non-return

Arises next to change-of-lineage -
This is thereby, then, the knowledge
Of the path of non-return -
And thus fruition follows on

Then, in the same way as before
And at this point, the non-returner
Is the sixth of noble ones
And after death, she reappears

Elsewhere apparitionally
And thus attains complete extinction -
No return through rebirth-linking -
After that, there comes reviewing

As it was described before -
Now having thus reviewed this way
The path that leads to non-return
This noble one decides to reach

The fourth attainment on the path
By cutting off, without remainder
Avarice, thus, for the formed
The formless, and conceit as well

And restlessness and ignorance -
She brings to bear the faculties
And also, then, the powers, too
And factors of enlightenment

Discerning all formations, then
As changing, painful, and not-self
And going through progressive insights -
When there's equanimity

About formations, at the end
Conformity arises, then
Along with change-of-lineage
Thus, in the way described before -

And so the path of Arhatship
Arises next to change-of-lineage -
This is thereby, then, the knowledge
Of the path of Arhatship

And thus fruition follows on
Then, in the same way as before
And at this point, the Arhat, then
Will be the eighth of noble ones

A Great One, with afflictions gone
This body is her last to bear
The burden has been thus laid down
The goal attained, no more becoming

And she's rightly liberated
Worthy of the highest offerings
Of this world with deities -
So these are thus the fourfold paths -

In order to appreciate
The value of this purity
By knowledge and pure vision with
Its fourfold kinds of knowledge, then

More points to study will repay
Each with its special part to play -
The first of these, herein, is thus
Fulfilment of the states, thereby

Partaking in enlightenment
Of which there are, then, thirty-seven [44] -
First, the four foundations, then
Of mindfulness, and then there are

The fourfold right endeavours, and
The fourfold roads to power, then
The fivefold faculties, and then
The fivefold powers, too, and then

The seven factors, followed by
The Noble Eightfold Path, therein -
The first is a *foundation*, then
Because of an establishment

By going down into, or thus
Descending onto, certain objects -
Such establishment, then, is
Foundation, thus of mindfulness -

And it is fourfold, then, because
It thus occurs in reference to
The body, feeling, consciousness
And also mental objects, too

By taking them respectively
As full of filth, and painful, then
Impermanent, and lacking self
And in this way, it thus discards

Perception, thus, of beauty and
Of pleasure, permanence, and selfhood -
They endeavour, then, by this
And so *endeavour* it is called

A good endeavour, thus, is right
For by its means they venture rightly
Therefore, it is right endeavour -
And it’s good, as it discards

The ugliness of the defilements
And because it brings about
Improvement, and the precedence
Of welfare, health and happiness -

It's also known as *energy* -
Accomplishing the functions of
Discarding tainted things arisen
And preventing the arising

Of the ones not yet arisen
And it works to thus arouse
Constructive things yet unarisen
And maintaining all those, then

Which have already, thus, arisen -
Therefore, it is fourfold, and
Is called the 'fourfold right endeavours' -
Power, then, is a success

According to the right exertion -
It's the *road*, then, *to that power*
As it is the precedence
Of the concomitant success

And also, thus, the prior cause
Of that success which is its fruit
And it is fourfold, therefore, as -
The road to power, thus, of zeal

The road to power of energy
The road to power, made up of
The purity of consciousness
And finally the road to power

Which consists, then, of inquiry -
Faculty, then, has the meaning
Of predominance, thus, or
Of overcoming, it is said

Because these states, respectively
Will overcome, thus, faithlessness
And idleness, and negligence
Distraction, and confusion, too -

And *power's* an unwaveringness
Because these states, as powers, then
Cannot, thereby, respectively
Be overcome by faithlessness

And idleness, and all the rest
And both are, therefore, fivefold as
Made up of faith and energy
And mindfulness and concentration

And then understanding, too -
And next there are the *seven factors*
Therein, *of enlightenment*
As factors in a being on

The pathway to enlightenment -
The first one, then, is mindfulness
Analysis-of-states, and then
There's energy, and happiness

Tranquillity, and concentration
Then there's equanimity -
The Noble Eightfold Path is, then
Right view, right thinking, and right speech

Right action, and right livelihood
Right effort, and right mindfulness
And lastly, then, right concentration -
These are thus the eight 'path factors'

In the sense that they're an outlet -
And so taken altogether
There are thirty-seven states
Partaking in enlightenment -

And furthermore, it's said of them -
"Thus, nine in one way, one in two ways
Then in four ways, and in five ways
In eight ways, and nine ways, too -

So in six ways they come to be" -
The "nine" are zeal, and consciousness
Then happiness, tranquillity
And equanimity, and thinking

And then speech and action, too
And lastly livelihood, therein -
And they are found "in one way," then
As thus consisting, thereby, in

The road to power as a group -
And faith is found “in two ways,” then
As faculty and as a power
And then concentration is

The one “in four ways,” since it is
A faculty, a power, and
A factor of enlightenment
And then a factor of the path -

And understanding is, thereby
The one “in five ways,” since it is
The four above, and also, then
A road to power, thus, as well -

And mindfulness is therefore, then
The one “in eight ways,” since it is
The four foundations, therein, and
A faculty, a power, and

A factor of enlightenment
And then a factor of the path -
And finally, then, energy
Is one “in nine ways,” since it is

The fourfold right endeavours, and
A road to power, faculty
A power, and a factor of
Enlightenment, and lastly then

A factor of the eightfold path -
“The states that share enlightenment
Are fourteen, undistributed
They total thirty-seven states

Among the groups distributed -
While each performs the proper task
That to its special lot falls due
They all come into being when

The Noble Eightfold Path comes true” -
So this is how *fulfilment of*
The states, thereby, *partaking in*
Enlightenment is understood -

And furthermore, then, it is stated -
“Understanding of emergence
And divorcing from formations
Is a change-of-lineage” [Ps] -

For as it has been said before -
“It overcomes arising, and
It enters non-arising, thus
It is a change-of-lineage

It overcomes occurrence, and
It enters non-occurrence, thus
It is a change-of-lineage” -
And this continues, then, until -

“It overcomes formations, and
It enters in cessation, so
It is a change-of-lineage” [Ps] -
So thus it is, the fourfold kinds

Of knowledge of the path, therefore
Emerge, thus, from the sign because
They have the signless as their object
And emerge, then, from occurrence

As they stop origination -
“At the time of stream-entry
Then right view in the sense of seeing
Thus emerges from wrong view

And also from defilements, and
The aggregates thereby occurring
Consequent upon that view
And it emerges from all signs -

For understanding of emergence
And divorcing from them both -
The sign, and thus occurrence, too
Is then the knowledge of the path -

Right thinking as directing, then
Emerges from wrong thinking, and
Right speech, considered as embracing
Thus emerges from wrong speech -

Right action, as originating
Then emerges from wrong action
And right livelihood, as cleansing
From wrong livelihood, appears

And then right effort, as exerting
From wrong effort, thus emerges
And right mindfulness, then, as
Establishment will thus appear -

Right concentration in the sense
Of non-distraction then emerges
From wrong concentration, too
And also from defilements, and

The aggregates that thus occur
As consequent upon that view
And from all signs it thus appears -
For understanding of emergence

And divorcing from them both -
The sign, and thus occurrence, too
Is thus the knowledge of the path -
And at the time of once-return

Then right view in the sense of seeing
Thus emerges from wrong view -
And this continues, then, until -
Right concentration in the sense

Of non-distraction then emerges
From wrong concentration, too
And also from gross fetters of
The greed for sense desires and

Resentment, and thus also from
The gross inherent tendency
To greed for sense desires, and
Resentment, therefore, then as well

And also from defilements, and
The aggregates that thus occur
As consequent upon that view
And from all signs it thus appears -

For understanding of emergence
And divorcing from them both -
The sign, and thus occurrence, too
Is thus the knowledge of the path -

And at the time of non-return
Then right view in the sense of seeing
Thus emerges from wrong view -
And this continues, then, until -

Right concentration in the sense
Of non-distraction then emerges
From wrong concentration, too
And also from residual fetters

Of the greed for sense desires
And resentment, and thus from
Residual latent tendencies
To greed for sense desires, and

Then of resentment, thus, as well
And also from defilements, and
The aggregates that thus occur
As consequent upon that view

And from all signs it thus appears -
For understanding of emergence
And divorcing from them both -
The sign, and thus occurrence, too

Is thus the knowledge of the path -
And when the Arhat path appears
Then right view in the sense of seeing
Thus emerges from wrong view -

And this continues, then, until -
Right concentration in the sense
Of non-distraction then emerges
From wrong concentration, too

And also from adherence to
The realm of form, and also to
The immaterial, and then from
Conceit, and agitation, and

Inherent tendencies, therein
To pride and grasping for becoming
And to ignorance as well
And it emerges from defilements

And the aggregates occurring
Consequent upon that view
And from all signs it thus appears -
For understanding of emergence

And divorcing from them both -
The sign, and thus occurrence, too
Is then the knowledge of the path" [Ps] -
Now, at the time of nurturing

The eight mundane attainments of
The first four meditative jhānas
And the four that are attained
Within the form and formless states

Serenity is in excess -
While at the time of nurturing
The deeper contemplations of
Impermanence and suffering

And emptiness and selflessness
Then insight, thus, is in excess
But when the noble path occurs
Then insight and serenity

Are thereby coupled in the sense
That neither one exceeds the other -
So there's *coupling of these powers*
In the fourfold kinds of knowledge

As accordingly it's said -
"Emerging from defilements of
The aggregates and discontent, then
Mental focus, non-distraction

And one's concentration has
Cessation, thus, as its domain -
Emerging from defilements, then
Of ignorance and discontent, then

Insight, thereby, in the sense of
Contemplation has cessation
Thus, as its domain, therein -
So insight and serenity

Are single in their nature, and
According to emergence, therefore
They are coupled on the path
And neither one exceeds the other" [Ps] -

With the powers coupled, thus
The fetters, then, can be abandoned -
They are 'fetters,' thus, because
They shackle all the aggregates

In this life to the next one, or
One's karma to its fruit, as well
Or beings, thus, to suffering -
Of fetters, there are ten, therein -

The greed for form and formless states
Conceit, and restlessness as well
And ignorance, which are, thereby
The fivefold higher fetters, thus

Because they shackle beings to
The aggregates that are produced
In higher forms, then, of becoming -
Then there is belief in 'self'

Uncertainty, adherence to
Religious rules and vows, and then
The greed for sense desires, and
Then lastly, animosity -

And these are thus the lower fetters
As they shackle beings to
The aggregates that are produced
In lower forms, then, of becoming -

So the states that are abandoned
On the path of stream-entry
Are false belief in self, and doubt
And holding on to rules and vows

And greed for sense desires, and hate
That end up in the states of loss -
And once-returners also drop
These first three fetters, and as well

Attenuate their greed and hate
Much further than stream-enterers -
And non-returners, therefore, have
Abandoned all their greed and hate

And thereby all the lower fetters -
Arhats, therefore, have abandoned
All the higher fetters, too
And thus are free from all the taints -

Now, at the times when noble persons
Penetrate, then, to the truths
Each one of the path knowledges
Is said to exercise four functions

In a single moment, as
Full-understanding, followed by
Abandoning, and realising
Then there is developing -

And each one should be recognised
According to its single essence -
As the Ancient Ones have said -
“Just as a lamp performs four functions

In a single moment, thus -
It burns the wick, dispels the darkness
Makes the light appear, and then
It uses up the oil, as well -

So too, path knowledge penetrates
The four truths simultaneously
Within a single moment, thus -
It penetrates to suffering

With total understanding, and
It penetrates origination
With abandoning, and then
It penetrates, thus, to the path, then

With developing, and then
It penetrates cessation, thus
With realising of the object -
What is meant is that it makes

Cessation, thus, its object, and
It reaches, sees and pierces
The fourfold truths, thereby, this way -
For she who thus sees suffering

Sees also, then, its origin
And thereby sees cessation, too
And sees the way that's leading to
Cessation of that suffering" [Ptk] -

And so it should be understood
For all the other truths, as well -
Just as the lamp, then, burns the wick
So too, path knowledge fathoms pain

And as the lamp dispels the darkness
So too, knowledge thus abandons
All origination, then -
And as the lamp makes light appear

So too then knowledge, as right view
Develops thus the path, thereby
By acting as conascence for
The states consisting in right thinking

And right speech, and all the rest -
And as the lamp consumes the oil
So path knowledge realises
Full cessation, and thus brings

An end to all afflictions, then -
So herein, then, there are two ways
In which the four truths are discerned -
As with a single truth as object

Or accomplishing its task
Referring to the other truths
While simultaneously, therein
Just making one of them its object -

As regards these contexts, then
When, firstly, suffering is the object
Then it has the aspect of
Oppressing as its single essence

But its *sense of being formed*
Is evident through origin
Because it is accumulated
Formed, and thus agglomerated

By that very origin
Whose aspect is accumulating -
Then the cooling path removes
The burning of afflictions, and

So suffering's *sense of burning* is
Made evident, then, through the path -
And suffering's *sense of changing*, thus
Becomes apparent when cessation

Is beheld as changeless, then -
And likewise, then, when origin
Is made the object, thus its aspect
Is *accumulating*, as

Its single essence, therein, but
Its *sense of being*, thus, *a source*
Is evident through seeing suffering -
As when sickness thus arises

From the source of tainted food -
And thus its *sense of bondage*, then
Becomes apparent through cessation
Being free, therefore, of bonds -

Its *sense*, then, *of impediment*
Becomes apparent through the seeing
Of the path as outlet, then -
And when cessation is the object

Then its aspect is *escape*
And yet its *meaning of seclusion*
Is made evident through seeing
Origin as unsecluded -

And its *sense of being formless*
Is apparent through the path
For thus the path itself is formed
Because it has conditions, then

And so the unformed nature of
Cessation, then, becomes quite clear -
Its *sense of being deathless*, though
Is evident through seeing pain

For suffering's full of poison, and
Nirvana is a deathless state -
And when the path is made the object
Then its aspect is the outlet

But its *meaning*, then, *of cause*
Is evident through origin
By apprehending origin
As not the cause, then, of Nirvana

And its *sense of seeing*, then
Becomes apparent through cessation
With its clarity of vision
And its subtlety of view -

And so its *sense of dominance*
Is evident through seeing suffering -
As superiority
Of lordly people is apparent

When the wretched are, thus, seen -
So at the moment of the path
These meanings are all penetrated
By a single knowledge, that

Displays four functions with respect
To suffering, thus, and all the others
Thereby, simultaneously -
Now as regards the functions, then -

"Full-understanding is threefold
And so too, then, abandoning
And realising is as well
And of developing, there's two" -

So of full-understanding, then
There are three classes - ‘as the known’
And ‘as investigating,’ and then
‘As abandoning’ is third -

Full-understanding as the known
Is knowledge, then, that is direct
And therefore knowledge of the known -
“For all should be directly known

Yet what should be directly known?
The eye must be directly known
The visible, directly known
Eye consciousness, directly known

And all the rest, directly known” **Ps 45** -
Its special plane is knowledge, thus
Of name-and-form and its conditions -
Knowledge as investigating

Is then briefly stated thus -
“Whatever states are understood
Have therefore been investigated -
What is fully understood?

The eye is fully understood
The visible is understood
Eye consciousness is understood -
And all the rest is understood” **Ps** -

Its special plane, thereby, begins with
Comprehension, thus, by groups
Occurring as investigation
Of impermanence, therein

And pain and also selflessness
Extending to conformity -
And then *full-understanding as*
Abandoning is knowledge, therefore

In the sense of giving up -
For as it has been said before -
“Thus, one who knows impermanence
Abandons views of permanence

And knowing pain's pervasiveness
She then discards all views of pleasure
And with knowledge of not-self
She thus abandons views of self" [Ps] -

Its special plane, thereby, begins with
Focus, then, on dissolution
Until knowledge of the path -
The function of abandoning

Is thus threefold, therein, as well -
'Abandoning', first, 'by suppressing'
Then 'abandoning,' therefore
By 'substituting opposites' -

And then there is 'abandoning
By cutting off, or severing' -
Suppressing of the hindrances
By mundane kinds of concentration -

Which is like the pressing down
Of water-weed, by porous pots -
And it's identified, then, as
Abandoning, thus, *by suppressing* -

And *abandoning*, therein
By *substituting opposites*
Occurs when any given state
Is thus abandoned, thereby, through

Opposing factors, then, of knowledge -
As when darkness is abandoned
Through the agency of light -
It is in fact, the dropping of

The false belief in self, then, through
Delimiting of name-and-form -
Abandoning of no-cause views
And views that have fictitious causes

And the stain of doubt, as well
Through understanding of conditions -
And it's the abandoning
Of seeing a conglomeration

Thus, as ‘I,’ ‘my self’ and ‘mine’
Through comprehension, then, by groups -
Abandoning, too, of the view
Of path in what is not the path

Through means of definition, then
Of what is path, and not the path -
And also the abandoning
Of views, thus, of annihilation

Through the means of seeing rise -
Abandoning eternal views
Thus, through the means of seeing fall -
Abandoning perception of

Non-terror, then, in what is terror
Through the means of seeing aspects
Everywhere, then, as a terror -
Then there is abandoning

Of the perception of enjoyment
Through the means of seeing danger -
And there is abandoning
Of the perception of delight

Through contemplation of dispassion -
And there is abandoning
Of lack of craving for deliverance
Through the craving for deliverance -

And there is abandoning
Of non-reflection, thereby, through
The application of reflection -
And there is abandoning

Of not perceiving equally
Through means of equanimity -
And then there is abandoning
Of apprehension, thus opposed

To knowledge, thereby, of the truth
Through means, thus, of conformity -
And furthermore, then, in the case
Of substituting opposites

There are these other insights, too -
First, dropping views of permanence
Through focus on impermanence
And dropping views of pleasure, then

Through contemplation, thus, of pain
And dropping views of self, as well
Through contemplation of not-self -
Abandoning delight, as well

Through contemplation of dispassion
And abandoning of greed, thus
Through the means of fading off -
Abandoning originating

By reflecting on cessation
And abandoning of grasping
Through the means of letting go
And dropping views, then, of compactness

Through reflection on destruction -
Also, views of lastingness
Through contemplation, thus, of change -
And then abandoning the sign

Through contemplation of the signless
And abandoning of lust
Through focus on desirelessness -
And dropping misinterpreting

Through contemplating voidness, then
And dropping misinterpreting
Because of grasping at a core
Through means of insight into states

Of higher understanding, thus -
And dropping misinterpreting
Dependent on confusion, thus
Through knowledge and pure vision, then -

And dropping misinterpreting
Dependent on formations, then
Through contemplation, thus, of danger -
Dropping non-reflection, too

Through focus on reflection, then -
And dropping misinterpreting
Dependent, thus, on bondage, then
Through means of turning back from that -

And after substitution, then
Of opposites, the next in line
Is the abandoning of fetters
So that they do not recur -

Like trees hit by a thunderbolt -
And it is labelled, therefore, as
Abandoning by cutting off -
For as the Ancient Ones have said -

“Abandoning by cutting off
Arises, thereby, in one who
Perfects the supramundane path
Which is destruction of defilements” [Ps] -

Of these three abandonings
Abandoning by cutting off
Is therefore what’s intended here -
For thus suppression, and thereby

Then substituting opposites
Both have that as their aim as well -
“For when someone has gained a realm
By killing off opposing kings

Then all their actions previously
Are also called ‘done by the king’” -
And realising, thereby, is
Divided into two, therein, as

‘Mundane realising,’ and then
‘Supramundane realising’ -
And it’s threefold, furthermore
With subdivision, therein, of

The supramundane into two
As ‘seeing’ and ‘developing’ -
So herein, *mundane realising*
Is the ‘touching of the jhānas’ -

Wherein ‘touch’ is contact, then
Of knowledge through experience, as
“I have thus arrived at this” -
Of which it can be summarised -

“For knowledge that is realised
Is knowledge in the sense of touch -
Whatever states are realised
Are states, therefore, that have been touched” [Ps] -

And so the seeing of Nirvana
When stream-entry thus occurs
Is *realising*, then, *as seeing* -
Other moments of the path

Are *realising*, therefore, *as*
Developing, and should be cognised
As a function, thus, of knowledge -
Lastly, then, the function of

Developing is thus twofold -
As *mundane*, thus, and *supramundane* -
In both cases, it arouses
Virtue, concentration, and then

Wisdom, so they influence
The continuities, therein
Respectively - and of these, then
It is the supramundane, thus

That is therefore intended here -
“So that’s why these are, one and all
The functions of full-understanding
And the rest, as stated when

The truths are penetrated to
And each one should be recognised
According to its single essence” -
Therefore, it was stated first, that -

“Those in virtue, deeply rooted
Sisters ardent and astute
Who nurture mind, and understanding
Will emancipate this tangling” [S]

19 – The Benefits in Developing Understanding

With a thump, the thunderbolt
Annihilates the rock, thereby
The fire whipped by driving wind
Annihilates the wood, as well

The radiant orb of solar flame
Annihilates the deepest dark -
Developed understanding, too
Annihilates inveterate

Defilements' netted overgrowth
The origin of every woe -
Such blessing in this very life
A nun herself may, therefore, know -

Asceticism's fruit, sublime
Which tranquilises all distress
Its beauty from the Deathless, draws
Its calm, from lack of worldliness

Composed of purifying bliss
It is the fountainhead, besides
Whose honey-sweet ambrosia, thus
A deathless sustenance provides -

Now, if a sister cultivates
Her understanding, she shall know
This peerless bliss, which is the taste
The noble fruit provides, and so

This is the reason why they call
Experience here and now, aright
That has the taste of noble fruit
A blessing of fulfilled insight

It is, then, at this moment when
The tangle is, thus, disentangled
Worthy of great offerings
To deities and noble ones -

"This understanding, thus developed
Will these blessings, thereby, win -
Accordingly, discerning nuns
Rejoice exceedingly therein"

20 – Conclusion

“For those in virtue deeply rooted
Sisters ardent and astute
Who nurture mind, and understanding
Will emancipate this tangling” [s] -

Thus, the treatise is set forth
Although it may still have some flaws
And after, thus, collating all
The expositions of these meanings

Classed as virtue, and so on
Let sisters, who, with knowledge deep
Desiring purity, display
Deep reverence, therefore, for the Path

Of Purity, the best by far -
What merit has been gained by me
In hoping, thus, to deepen any
Understanding of Good Dharma

Thus inspired by the Lama
Choedak Rinpoche, who is
The emanation of Manjushri -
Selfless and compassionate

And boundless in his grace and kindness
And his teaching of the Dharma -
By the power of that merit
May all beings thus be happy

Free from suffering, sorrowless
And may this Path reveal the way
For those who thereby seek the means
To ferry them across the worlds

Through purity of virtue and
Analysis, and understanding -
May the Lotus thus embedded
In the Heart of every being

Blossom into full awareness
Steeped in everlasting peace -
And may all beings gain attainment
Of the ultimate release

Notes

1. *Which is the base for consciousness* – for an extension of this formula which includes the other senses, see the Appendices, p. 453 (*More from the Buddha and the Ancient Ones*).

2. *The search that Buddhas all forsake* – this particular vow, as expressed in these three stanzas, is attributed to Buddha's foremost disciple, the venerable Śāriputra.

3. *Jewel of Jambu River gold* – the Jambu River (Jāmbūnadī) is one of the seven heavenly rivers in Jambudīpa (Ancient India) and is famous for its gold (see Majjhima Nikaya 120, and Bhante Sujato's note). The metaphor indicates that the type of pupil mentioned is very precious.

4. *What joy for those of broken virtue* – this stanza and the six that follow after describe the torments of the various hells awaiting those who cannot maintain their virtue.

5. *For she who wants to live apart* – this and the following stanzas outline the ascetic practices of 'dwelling' – respectively, *the forest-dweller, the tree-root-dweller, the open-air-dweller, the charnel-ground-dweller, the any-bed-user* and finally, *the sitter.*

6. *States occurring* – this refers to "such states as deceit, fraud, pride, evilness of wishes, greatness of wishes, discontent, foppery and personal vanity" (*Visuddhimagga*, Chapter III, 95).

7. *The twofold Codes* – see Chapter I, Note 11 and Chapter III, Note 9.

8. The 'sixfold modes' are, specifically, *non-greed, non-hate, non-delusion, renunciation, seclusion* and *relinquishment.*

9. *Divine abidings, and so on* – this section on the truth of suffering introduces the crucial concept, which is further elaborated in the *Visuddhimagga*, that everything we experience, even if it's meritorious, is a form a suffering. For the full list, see Chapter VII, 27-28.

10. *Formations, then, are therefore suffering* – the following stanzas refer to dependent origination.

11. *Gaining access and absorption* – in Chapter IV, 'access concentration' is likened to a young child that's lifted up and placed on its feet as it repeatedly falls to the ground, while 'absorption' is likened to a healthy man who, after rising from his seat, can stand for a whole day.

12. *The Sorrowless Asoka* – ruler of the Maurya Empire (268 to 232 BCE), who converted to Buddhism and had an immense influence on its dissemination throughout India and beyond.

13. *The 'midriff' is the coat of flesh* – in his notes to *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli acknowledges that "this rendering is obviously quite inadequate for what is described here, but there is no appropriate English word" (Chapter VIII, Note 28) – and indeed, 'midriff' is rendered in other translations variously as *diaphragm*, *pleura*, and *membraneous tissue*. Nevertheless, Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli's rendering has been retained here.

14. *Boredom and delight* – 'boredom,' here, is another word for aversion, and 'delight' specifically means 'sensual delight,' or the indulgence of the senses.

15. *Counting should be done in pairs* – more detailed instructions on this can be found here.

16. *When doubts regarding name-and-form* – throughout this text, 'name-and-form' is also rendered as 'mind-and-matter' and 'mentality-materiality' (likewise 'not-self' as 'selfless,' and 'feelings' as 'sensations' etc), depending on context and/or the limits of the metre.

17. *The aforementioned* – the three divine abidings practised so far: *loving-kindness, compassion,* and *sympathetic joy.* If there is any attachment to the cultivation of these abidings, then one's subsequent development of *equanimity* will be inhibited.

18. *Each one has a simile* – only the titles of the following similes are given in the *Visuddhimagga* (see Chapter XI, 3). The full versions – which are the source for these renditions – are found in the *Saṁyuttanikāya* and can be read here.

19. *Beings weak in merit have the four secretions* – according to the *Visuddhimagga* "Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas and Wheel-turning Monarchs have only one of the four secretions consisting of bile, phlegm, pus and blood, but those with weak merit have all four" (Chapter XI, 17).

20. *As noble Nágasena said* – the full account can be read here.

21. *Before developing the 'trunk'* – the metaphor of the tree, as expounded in this and the three previous stanzas encapsulates the entire Path of Purity, in which the first two parts, *Virtue* and *Concentration*, are the 'roots' of the path that provide the foundation for what will follow. Then the first part of the section on *Understanding*, starting with the 'aggregates' and moving on to the 'bases and elements' (not the four primary elements which were initially outlined under *Concentration*) and the 'Noble Truths' and 'Dependent Origination,' is the 'soil' of the path, or the nutrimental conditions that enable it to flourish. Finally, the last few chapters in the section on *Understanding*, which describe the 'purification of knowledge and view,' are the 'trunk' of the path that lead directly to Nirvana.

22. *Materiality is then...* – see Table 1 in the Appendices.

23. A *primal readiness to grasp* – the word 'primal' here and in the following stanzas refers to the four (primary) elements – earth, water, fire, and air.

24. *In holding, fixing, growth, and movement* – this refers to the functions of the four elements, the first being earth which acts as foundation, followed by water with its cohering effect, then the maturing or ripening function of fire, and finally air, with its function of mobility.

25. *Constructive, tainted, non-aligned* – in Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli's translation these are more faithfully rendered as *profitable, unprofitable,* and *indeterminate*: "*Profitable* in the sense of health, blamelessness, and pleasant result. *Unprofitable* in the opposite sense. *Indeterminate* because not describable as either profitable or unprofitable" (Chapter XIV, Note 35).

26. *We see the next four minds arise* – the first two of these 'minds' are accompanied by equanimity and knowledge, assisted or unassisted (Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli uses 'prompted' and 'unprompted') and the next two are once again with equanimity, but lacking knowledge, and likewise assisted or unassisted.

27. *We see the next four minds arise* – as above, but replacing 'knowledge' with 'wrong view.'

28. *They're grouped by joy and so on, as above* – that is, according to *joy, equanimity, wrong view* and *prompting (assisting)*.

29. *Regarded as the razor-wheel* – for the story behind this, see *The Jataka, Vol. IV, No. 439*.

30. *'Nirodha gaminii patipada'* – to keep this phrase as a whole, the line has been extended.

31. *The fourfold noble paths* – Stream-entry, Once-return, Non-return, and Arhat (or Worthy One).

32. *The understanding aggregate* – see Table 2 in the Appendices.

33. *Conditional origination* – see Table 3 and 'Concise Definitions for the Factors of Dependent Origination' in the Appendices.

34. *'Gone unto its counterpart'* – the *Visuddhimagga* elaborates thus: "the manifestation of formations, etc. is called *dependent,* taking it as *facing, gone to, its counterpart* owing to the mutual interdependence of the factors in the combination" (Chapter XVII, 18).

35. *And so the first impulsion, then* – a cognitive moment that produces karma at its climax.

36. *The three kinds of formations* – that is, of merit, demerit and the imperturbable (formless).

37. (*Some karma) classed as 'weighty' or 'habitual,' 'near to death,' or then there is 'what was performed in previous rebirths'* – for more information on these kinds of karma, see Chapter XIX, 15, and Note 3.

38. *A*nd *then there is the 'mental-touch'* – a more accurate, yet more unwieldy, rendering would probably be something like:

> *Therein, as in 'eye-contact'*
> *And 'ear-contact,' and 'nose-contact'*
> *And 'tongue-contact,' and 'body contact'*
> *And then 'contact of the mind'*

39. *Yet when the formula's expressed* – as in, "with the sixfold base as condition, there is contact."

40. *Since three feelings* – namely, 'pleasant,' 'painful,' and 'neither pleasant nor painful.'

41. *And in the future, fivefold fruit* – see Table 4 in the Appendices.

42. *Of formations in the round* – there is, perhaps, a further 'link' that could be added here. Though not explicitly mentioned in the *Visuddhimagga*, it could certainly be implied from the chapter on Dependent Origination. Following the *Lotus Heart* format, this 'extra link' might be rendered as:

> *And neither, then, does* ***ignorance***
> *Not come about, thus, from* ***afflictions***
> *Nor arise from something else*
> *Within the endless round of birth*
>
> *It only rises from* ***afflictions***
> *Strictly with that very nature*
> *Thus, of* ***ignorance****, therein*

43. *Meaning can be thus discerned* – for more on this, see Chapter XVII, Note 48

44. *Of which there are, then, thirty-seven* – see 'Wings of Freedom' in the Appendices.

45. *'And all the rest, directly known'* – see 'Ideas to be Directly Known' in the Appendices.

APPENDICES

Resources

Overview of Buddhaghosa's Vishuddhimagga - Readings by Lama Choedak Rinpoche

Visuddhimagga – Online (Electronic Dhamma Books)

Visuddhimagga – The Path of Purification (PDF)

Visuddhimagga – with Yuttadhammo Bhikkhu

Nyanatiloka Thera's *Buddhist Dictionary*

Encyclopedia of Buddhism

Access to Insight

Sutta Central

84000

Further Reading

Treatise on Knowledge (from the Paṭisambhidāmagga)

Brahmajāla Sutta: The All-embracing Net of Views

Compendium of Phenomena (Dhammasaṅgaṇī)

The Twelve Links of Dependent Origination

Systematic Outlines of Meditation Practice

The Episode of Dṛḍhādhyāśaya

Apannaka Sutta: A Safe Bet

The Word of the Buddha

The Life of Sariputta

Milindapañha

Vibhaṅga

Table 1 – The Materiality Aggregate

Showing the divisions of materiality and their respective modes of apprehension.

(Adapted from the *Visuddhimagga*, Chapter XIV, 34-80)

Four Primary Elements (Great Entities)	Apprehension
Earth (solidity, hardness) Fire (heat, maturing, ripening) Air (distension and motion)	(*Tangible datum) Sensed
Water (liquidity, cohesion)	Cognised
Derived Materiality	**Apprehension**
Eye-sensitivity of matter Ear-sensitivity of matter Nose-sensitivity of matter Tongue-sensitivity of matter Body-sensitivity of matter	Sensed
Visible-datum	Seen through the eye
Sound	Heard through the ear
Odour Flavour (*Tangible-data is included in the primaries)	Sensed through nose, tongue and body
Femininity Masculinity Life Heart-basis Bodily intimation (gesture) Verbal intimation (speech) Space element Lightness of matter Malleability of matter Wieldiness of matter Growth of matter Continuity of matter Ageing of matter Impermanence of matter Physical nutriment	Cognised through mind

Table 2 – The Noble Eightfold Wheel

Showing the breakdown of the Noble Eightfold Path into the three aggregates of virtue, conncentration, and wisdom (understanding) – for a detailed outline of this classification, see *Buddhadhamma*, by Bhikkhu P. A. Payutto, Chapter 12.

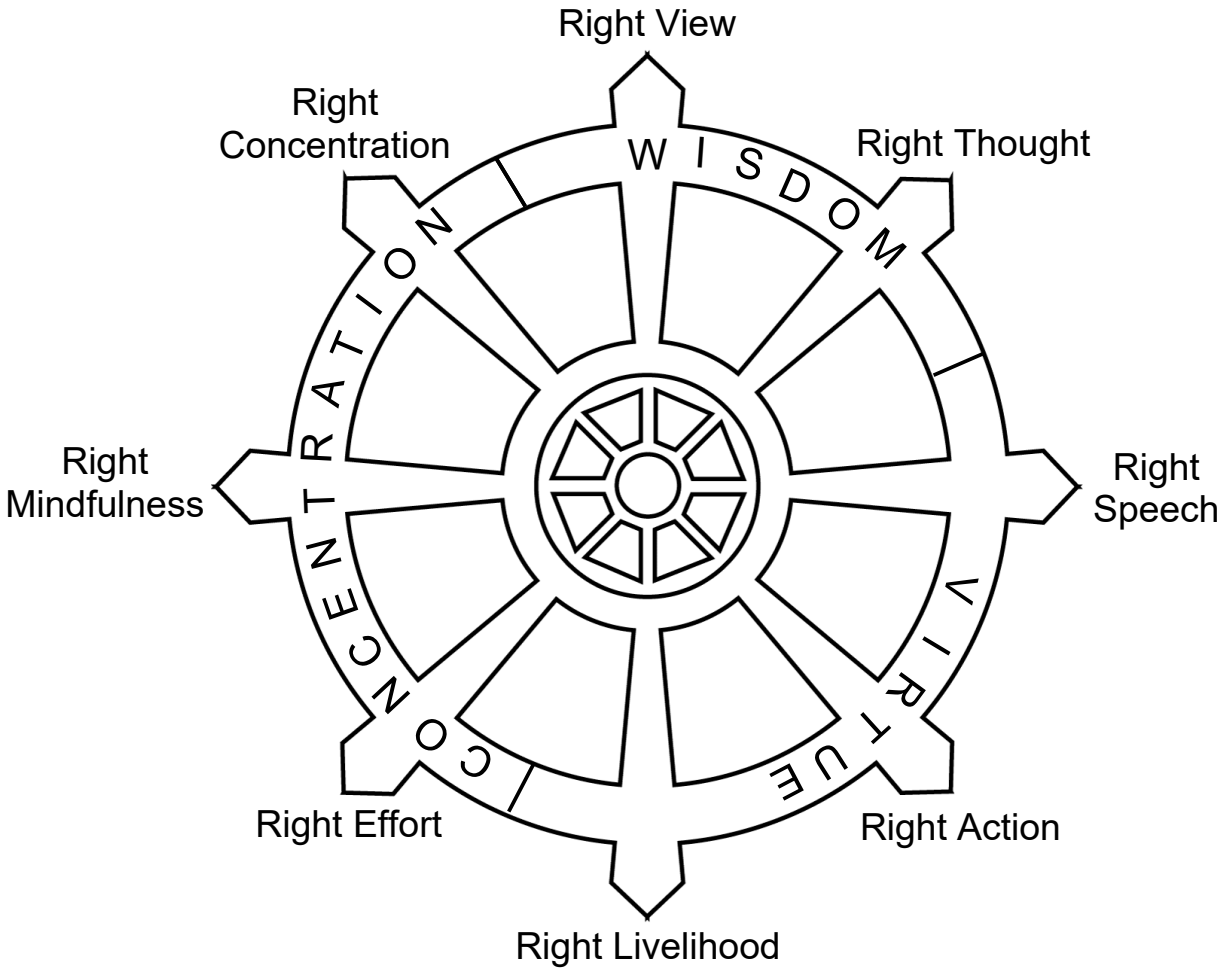

Table 3 – Sixfold Dependent Origination (Sensual Becoming)

Visual Interpretation of Buddhaghosa's Exposition

1	Ignorance of suffering, impermanence, karma and emptiness ⇩ Karmic formations					
2	⇩ Consciousness ⇕ Mentality-Materiality (Name-and-Form) ⇔ ⇔ ⇔ ⇔ ⇔ ⇔ **Six Sense Spheres (Sixfold Base)**					
	Eye - Sight - Visual Object ⇩ Contact ⇩ Feeling	*Ear - Sound - Aural Object* ⇩ Contact ⇩ Feeling	*Nose - Smell - Olfactory Object* ⇩ Contact ⇩ Feeling	*Tongue - Taste - Gustatory Object* ⇩ Contact ⇩ Feeling	*Body - Touch - Tactile Object* ⇩ Contact ⇩ Feeling	*Mind - Thought - Mental Objects* ⇩ Contact ⇩ Feeling
3	⇩ Craving ⇩ Clinging ⇩ Becoming	⇩ Craving ⇩ Clinging ⇩ Becoming	⇩ Craving ⇩ Clinging ⇩ Becoming	⇩ Craving ⇩ Clinging ⇩ Becoming	⇩ Craving ⇩ Clinging ⇩ Becoming	⇩ Craving ⇩ Clinging ⇩ Becoming
4	⇩ Birth (Rebirth) ⇩ Anxiety Sickness Ageing-Death Sorrow Grief	⇩ Birth (Rebirth) ⇩ Anxiety Sickness Ageing-Death Sorrow Grief	⇩ Birth (Rebirth) ⇩ Anxiety Sickness Ageing-Death Sorrow Grief	⇩ Birth (Rebirth) ⇩ Anxiety Sickness Ageing-Death Sorrow Grief	⇩ Birth (Rebirth) ⇩ Anxiety Sickness Ageing-Death Sorrow Grief	⇩ Birth (Rebirth) ⇩ Anxiety Sickness Ageing-Death Sorrow Grief

CHRONOLOGY	**SUMMARIZATION**
Group 1: PAST	**Group 1:** Formations
Group 2: PRESENT	**Group 2:** Contact
Group 3: PRESENT	**Group 3:** Becoming
Group 4: FUTURE	**Group 4:** Birth & Death

Concise Definitions for the Factors of Dependent Origination

A list of more generalised and simplified definitions for the factors of Dependent Origination, adapted from *Buddhadhamma*, by Bhikkhu P. A. Payutto, Chapter 4:

1. *Ignorance*: not knowing the truth; not applying wisdom.
2. *Formations*: thoughts; intentions; mental disposition; habits.
3. *Consciousness*: awareness of the external world and of the content of the mind; state of mind.
4. *Name-and-form*: the constituents of life, both physical and mental.
5. *The sixfold base*: the channels for cognition, i.e.: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.
6. *Contact*: cognition; interaction with the external world; contact with sense objects.
7. *Feeling*: pleasurable, painful, and neutral feelings.
8. *Craving*: the desire for gain, for existence, for eternal life, for escape, for disappearance, or for annihilation.
9. *Clinging*: attachment; mental preoccupation; latent desire; ambition; cherished values; identification.
10. *Becoming*: current state of existence; personality; the entire range of human behaviour.
11. *Birth*: the birth of a 'self' that embodies the state of existence and interacts with the world. This 'self' claims ownership and control over proceedings.
12. *Ageing-and-death*: the encounter with decline, instability, loss, and passing away in regard to the 'self's' occupation of this state of existence.

    Grief, sorrow, lamentation, mourning, distress, self-pity, hopelessness, and despair: various forms of suffering, which resemble toxins festering in the mind, and when outwardly expressed generate more problems.

All conditioned things arise from the convergence of interconnected factors; they exist according to the interrelationship of causes and conditions, and therefore they are unstable, impermanent, and unsustainable. Their associated factors are in a constant state of conflict and pressure; these things are not truly independent, they cannot be truly owned by anyone, and they are ultimately not subject to anyone's desires and wishes. When things exist in this way, how should we relate to them? Is it appropriate to be totally engrossed with conditioned things or to dedicate one's life to pursuing them? Every human being too is a conditioned phenomenon and subject to the same natural laws; we are all companions in old age, sickness, and death. As a consequence, how should we relate to one another?

From *Buddhadhamma*, by Bhikkhu P. A. Payutto, Chapter 13

Table 4 – The Three Times of Becoming

Showing conditionality as extending over three lives.

Format 1 – from Nyanatiloka Maháthera's *Buddhist Dictionary.*

Past	1. Ignorance 2. Formations	Karma-process becoming: five causes, 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
Present	3. Consciousness 4. Mentality-materiality 5. Sixfold-base 6. Contact 7. Feeling	Rebirth-process becoming: five results, 3–7
	8. Craving 9. Clinging 10. Becoming	Karma-process becoming: five causes, 1, 2, 8, 9, 10
Future	11. Birth (or rebirth) 12. Ageing-and-death	Rebirth-process becoming: five results, 3–7

Format 2 – alternative version.

Formations	**Contact**	**Becoming**	**Birth, Ageing & Death**
Ignorance Formations Craving Clinging Becoming	Consciousness Mentality-materiality Sixfold-base Contact Feeling	Ignorance Formations Craving Clinging Becoming	Consciousness Mentality-materiality Sixfold-base Contact Feeling
Karma-process becoming *PAST CAUSES*	*Rebirth-process becoming* *PRESENT RESULTS*	*Karma-process becoming* *PRESENT CAUSES*	*Rebirth-process becoming* *FUTURE RESULTS*

Herein, ignorance and formations are one summarization; consciousness, mentality-materiality, the sixfold base, contact, and feeling are another; craving, clinging, and becoming are another; and birth and ageing-and-death are another. Here the first summarization is past, the two middle ones are present, and birth and ageing-and-death are future.

From the *Visuddhimagga*, Chapter VII, 21

Ideas To Be Directly Known

Based on the first 'Treatise on Knowledge' recitations in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga.*

The Four Truths

Suffering is to be directly known
The origin of suffering is to be directly known
The cessation of suffering is to be directly known
The way leading to the cessation of suffering is to be directly known

(Materiality) is to be directly known
The origin of (materiality) is to be directly known
The cessation of (materiality) is to be directly known
341 The way leading to the cessation of (materiality) is to be directly known

The meaning of fully understanding (materiality) is to be directly known
The meaning of abandoning the origin of (materiality) is to be directly known
The meaning of realising the cessation of (materiality) is to be directly known
The meaning of developing the way leading to the cessation of (materiality) is to be directly known

The meaning of penetration as the full understanding of (materiality) is to be directly known
The meaning of penetration as the abandoning of the origin of (materiality) is to be directly known
The meaning of penetration as the realising of the cessation of (materiality) is to be directly known
The meaning of penetration as the developing of the way leading to the cessation of (materiality) is to be directly known

(Materiality) is to be directly known
The origin of (materiality) is to be directly known
The cessation of (materiality) is to be directly known
The cessation of the origin of (materiality) is to be directly known
The cessation of zeal and greed for (materiality) is to be directly known
The attraction in (materiality) is to be directly known
The danger in (materiality) is to be directly known
The escape from (materiality) is to be directly known

The Seven Contemplations

Contemplation of impermanence is to be directly known
Contemplation of pain is to be directly known
Contemplation of not-self is to be directly known
Contemplation of dispassion is to be directly known
Contemplation of fading away is to be directly known
Contemplation of cessation is to be directly known
Contemplation of relinquishment is to be directly known

Contemplation of impermanence in the case of (materiality) is to be directly known
Contemplation of pain in the case of (materiality) is to be directly known
Contemplation of not-self in the case of (materiality) is to be directly known
Contemplation of dispassion in the case of (materiality) is to be directly known
Contemplation of fading away in the case of (materiality) is to be directly known
Contemplation of cessation in the case of (materiality) is to be directly known
Contemplation of relinquishment in the case of (materiality) is to be directly known

Visuddhimagga, Chapter XX, 6

See the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* (from '201: Ideas') for the full list of substitutions.

More from the Buddha and the Ancient Ones

Further adaptations from the sutras. Most of the following excerpts are based on Robin Moore's translations in the book *Buddhadhamma*, by Bhikkhu P. A. Payutto. Any exceptions will include a link to the source material.

Conditioned things are only fleeting
Prone to rise and pass away
And having risen, then they cease -
Their stilling is the truest bliss

From the Dīghanikāya

And why do you assume 'a being?'
Mara, have you grasped a view?
For this is just a mere construction -
Nothing here can be construed

As with assembly of the parts
The name of 'chariot's' applied
So, when the aggregates are present
'Being,' then, is utilised -

For only suffering comes to be
And suffering stands and falls away -
There's nothing else that comes to be
And nothing else that falls away

From the Vajira Sutta

O nuns I ask, when what exists
When due to what, when grasping what
Does such a view as this arise -
That 'this is I, my self, and mine?'

When there is form, and also feeling
And perceptions and volitions
And then consciousness, as well -
When due to form, when due to feeling

And perceptions and volitions
And then consciousness, as well -
When grasping form, when grasping feeling
And perceptions and volitions

And then consciousness, as well -
When these exist and are adhered to
Such a view as this arises -
'This is I, my self, and mine'

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

Now listen sisters, I will teach
Totality, the whole of life -
And what, then, is totality?
The eye and forms

The ear and sounds
The nose and odours, tongue and tastes
The body and its tactile objects -
Mind and mental objects, too -

Totality is only this -
If anyone were then to say
“Aside from this totality
There is another one I preach”

Those words would just be empty words
With no foundation, thus, and why?
Because that person would be preaching
Knowledge that cannot be known

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

Whatever, thus, that one intends
And what one pays attention to
And what one thereby thinks about
It thus becomes the basis, then

For maintenance of consciousness -
And with a basis, then there is
Establishment of consciousness
And when it is, thereby established

And has come to growth, there is
Production of renewed existence -
With renewed existence, therefore
Future birth, and ageing-death

And sorrow, lamentation, pain
Despair, and grief, then come to be -
So this is the origination
Of this mass of suffering

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

Thus, pain and pleasure, fame and shame
And gain and loss, and praise and blame -
For humans these are transient
Inconstant, and thus bound to change

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

My son has thrown away his body
As a snake casts off old skin
There is no use, now, for his body
Once he passed away, therein

From other worlds he came unsummoned
When he left, I gave not leave
But as he came, then so he went -
I should not his departure grieve

For if I keen, I waste away -
What benefit is there in this?
My friends and relatives, for sure
Would anguish, thereby, even more

As children wail and cry in vain
To try and grasp the moon above
So people idly mourn the loss
Of those deceased, then, whom they love

But those cremated do not feel
Or hear their relatives' lament
Therefore, I do not cry or grieve -
He fares the way he had to tread

From the Jātaka

For short indeed, then, is this life
Within a hundred years, or so
Yet people grieve for what is 'mine'
Though nothing stands the test of time

So those who see this separation
Should take on the homeless life -
Whatever one conceives as 'mine'
Must be relinquished, thus, at death

So let a sage on Buddha's path
Be free from all possessiveness -
Just as a waking man won't see
The folks encountered in a dream

So too, one does not ever meet
One's loved ones when they are deceased -
Though now these people may have fame
When they are gone they're only names

From the Suttanipāta

So thus, the Blessed One has stated -
“Form is like a lump of foam
And feeling’s like a water bubble
And perception’s a mirage -

Volitions are a plantain trunk
And consciousness a magic trick -
However one considers and
Investigates the aggregates

They are but emptiness, and void
When one discerns them thoroughly
With reference to this body, so
The Greatest Sage has thereby taught

Abandonment of greed and hate
Delusion, and conceit as well -
Behold the body, thrown aside
When life, and heat, and consciousness

No longer, thus, therein abide
And so it lies there, cast away
A senseless thing, just food for others -
Such is this continuum

Deceiving and beguiling fools -
These aggregates are murderers
Yet here no substance can be found
A nun with energy aroused

Should view the aggregates as such
And always, then, by day or night
Thus comprehend them, ever mindful
And abandon all the bonds

And make a refuge for herself
And act, then, as with head ablaze
So she can reach the stainless state -
The unconditioned, perfect bliss”

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

For one who understands the truth
Who’s free from craving and from views
Delighting not in life or death
Is such a person I call calmed

From the Suttanipāta

For mind is master of all states
And they're achieved by way of mind
So if one acts with impure mind
Then suffering follows close behind

As surely as the wagon's wheel
Pursues the oxen in the lead -
For mind is master of all states
And they're achieved by way of mind

So if one acts with purest mind
Then happiness is close behind
As surely as one's radiance*
Thus, never leaves and always shines

From the Dhammapada

* In his notes in *Buddhadhamma,* Robin Moore points out that though the Pali word *chāyā* is usually translated as 'shadow,' it can also mean 'radiance,' 'reflection,' 'beauty,' or 'light'

Whatever sort of seed is sown
That is the sort of fruit one reaps -
From good, a good result will grow
From evil, therein evil sleeps

From the Saṁyuttanikāya and the Jātaka

An evil deed does not bear fruit
Immediately, but still it lasts -
Like milk that curdles not at once
Or smouldering ash, it follows on

From the Dhammapada

For in this world, there are, great king
When they arise, thereby, three things
That cause one harm, discomfort, pain -
And they are greed, delusion, hate

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

For action makes the world go round
And makes this generation wander -
Beings are by action bound
As by the pin, the wheel is bound

From the Majjhimanikāya

O sisters, there are these five ways
To rid resentment when it comes -
You should develop loving-kindness
For the person you resent

And then develop deep compassion
Nurture equanimity
And do not pay attention to
The person, then, that you resent

But focus on their ownership -
“They are the owner of their deeds
And thus it’s their inheritance
Their deeds are refuge, womb, and kin -

Of all their deeds they shall be heir
No matter if they’re good or bad” -
That’s how to rid resentment, then
When it has risen for someone

From the Aṅguttaranikāya

Maintain no longing for the past
Nor on the future fantasise -
The past has long been left behind
The future has not yet arrived

Let one who clearly thus discerns
And understands the present moment -
Absolute, unshakeable -
Endeavour to attain this state

So hasten with your effort now
For death may come at any time
The Lord of Death, the General
Can never thus be bargained with

But one who’s ardent, diligent
And dwelling thus by night and day
‘Tis she, the Buddha calls supreme
Though living just a single day

From the Majjhimanikāya

Don't fantasise for what is old
Or celebrate when something's new
Don't grieve for what is running out
Or cling to things that pull you in

For greed's the greatest flood of all
And longing, therefore, is the wave -
The basis, the compulsion, and
The swamp of senses in the way

From the Suttanipāta

Whoever gives up heedlessness
And then abides in mindfulness -
'Tis she, illuminates the world
Just like the full moon, free from cloud

Whoever cancels evil deeds
By way of wholesome deeds, thereby -
'Tis she, illuminates the world
Just like the full moon, free from cloud

From the Dhammapada

I do not see a single thing
So quick to change, then, as the mind -
And any simile that shows
This speed of change, I cannot find

From the Aṅguttaranikāya

I do not see a single doctrine
Promulgating views of self
That won't arouse great suffering
In anyone who clings to it

From the Majjhimanikāya

Who sees becoming as becoming
Sees the state beyond becoming
In accord, then, with the Truth
And thus her craving is exhausted

With full knowledge of becoming
Rid of being and non-being
Now that all of it has ceased
A nun comes not to further birth

From the Itivuttaka

A sage will never see themselves
As better, worse, or as an equal -
Void of clinging, thus they know
There's no restart, or letting go

From the Suttanipāta

As this refreshing zephyr blows
All laden with the scent of bloom
I'll burst asunder ignorance
While seated on the mountain top

In mountain heights adrift with flowers
Where it's cool and forested
I'll take delight in mountain caves
And dwell in wisdom's boundless space

From the Theragāthā

Since I enrobed and thus went forth
From lay life into homelessness
I have not witnessed any thoughts
Of ignorance or hatefulness -

"I want these beings to be killed!
May they be slaughtered! May they suffer!"
No such thoughts have thus been willed
In all my life in homelessness

I've been aware of loving-kindness
Limitless and well-developed
Gradually consolidated
As instructed by the Buddha

As a friend to one and all
Who has compassion for all beings
I cultivate my loving-kindness
And delight in harmlessness

Rejoicing, thereby, in that mind
Unfaltering, unshakeable -
Abiding in the love divine
That foolish folk don't know about

In meditation, free from views
A monk, disciple of the Buddha
Finds himself immediately
Within a state of holy silence

As a towering, rocky mountain
Is unshakeable and firm
So too, when ignorance is slain
Then just like mountains, he remains

Thus, to the monk who is unsullied
Always seeking what is pure
Even just a wisp of evil
Will appear as big as storm clouds

As a frontier city is
Protected both inside and out
So should you thus protect your mind -
Don't let this moment pass you by

Delighting not in death at all
Nor do I hanker, then, for life -
I do my chores and wait my time
Like workers waiting for their wage

Delighting not in death at all
Nor do I hanker, then, for life -
I will discard this body, then
With clarity and focussed mind

Through me, the teachers have been served
And I've fulfilled the Buddha's words
The heavy burden is laid down
And rebirth is eradicated

Therefore, I've attained the goal
Of going forth to homelessness -
Extinction of all bondage, and
The final ending of all fetters

Through awareness, gain your freedom
This is my instruction, now -
So come, Nirvana waits for you
With liberation absolute

From the Theragāthā

And why is her complexion bright?
A nun who realises Dharma
Does not sorrow for the past
Nor fantasise about the future

She just sees what's here and now
So her complexion, thus, is bright -
A fool who doesn't know the Truth
Will fantasise about the future

And she'll grieve about the past
So her complexion, then, is haggard -
Like a reed that has been plucked
And left to dry out in the sun

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

The nun who, for the sake of all
Has found release from death's allure
Reveals the Dharma and the method
For the good of gods and humans -

She who rouses confidence
In those who see and hark to her
Is one who is accomplished in
The path and what is not the path

This taintless one who has, thereby
Accomplished all that must be done
Whose body is her final one -
Is thus "a nun of wisdom great"

From the Aṅguttaranikāya

At dawn those sisters venture forth
From dwellings, forests, hills, and trees -
The way they walk, both back and forth
The way they cast their eyes around

The way they bend and move their arms
Inspires faith in those who see -
With eyes cast down in contemplation
Their demeanour is perfection

From the Vinaya Piṭaka

“People in the past we killed
For sacrifice, or for their wealth
Without exception were afraid
For thus they trembled and they wailed

But you display no fear at all
And you look calmer than before -
How is it that you don’t cry out
With danger to your life so great?”

“There is no mental suffering, chief
For one who’s not attached to life
And one who has destroyed all bonds
Has passed beyond all fear of strife

For with the link to rebirth gone
The truth is seen, then, as it is -
There is no fear of death, it’s like
Relinquishing a burden, thereby...

One who’s reached the Ultimate
Needs nothing further in the world
He’s not aggrieved by death, because
He has escaped a burning house

For all the worldly things there are
And all the realms attainable
Are thus dependent and conditioned
As the Buddha has petitioned…

There’s no thought of ‘I have been’
‘I will be,’ or ‘I will not be’
Or ‘my formations will dissolve’ -
Why should I cry for these formations?

One who’s sees the truth, thereby
That just phenomena arise
With just formations in succession
Does not fear or tremble, chief

For when the world is seen with wisdom
Like it’s wood and grass, therein -
Not grasping anything as ‘mine’
One does not grieve that ‘mine is lost’

There's no more need, then, for this body
And no realm I wish to be -
This body will disintegrate
Another one, there will not be

However you would treat my body
Do then, as your wish commands
There'll be no anger or delight
Within me, on account of that" -

Thus listening to the elder's words
The bandits' hair then stood on end -
They humbly laid their weapons down
And asked how this could be attained…

And when they'd heard the seer's words
They bowed before the Worthy Sage -
Then some refrained from former deeds
While others chose to be ordained

From the Theragāthā (abridged)

The sweetest bliss of worldly pleasures
And the godlike bliss of heaven
Equal not one-sixteenth of
The happiness of craving's end

From the Udāna

This shape has not been fabricated
Nor has it been, thus, contrived
On causes only, it's dependent -
When they cease, it also dies

For just as seeds, when sown, will sprout
Dependent on the nutrients
And moisture, too, and other factors
In the soil, and in the seeds

So too, these aggregates and senses
And the elements, therein
Arise dependent on their causes
And then cease, when they decline

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

Nuns, the body is not-self
For if the body were the self
It would not cater to affliction
So it would be possible

To have it of the body, thus -
“O may my body be this way
And may it not become that way” -
But as the body is not-self

It therefore caters to affliction
So it is not possible
To have it of the body, thus -
“O may my body be this way

And may it not become that way” -
And feeling also is not-self
For then if feeling were the self
It would not cater to affliction

So it would be possible
To have it, then, of feeling, thus -
“O may my feeling be this way
And may it not become that way” -

However feeling is not-self
And so it caters to affliction
So it is not possible
To have it, then, of feeling, thus -

“O may my feeling be this way
And may it not become that way” -
And so perception is not-self
For if perception were the self

It would not cater to affliction
So it would be possible
To have it of perception, thus -
“May my perception be this way

And may it not become that way” -
But as perception is not-self
It therefore caters to affliction
So it is not possible

To have it of perception, thus -
“May my perception be this way
And may it not become that way” -
Formations also are not-self

For if formations were the self
They would not cater to affliction
So it would be possible
To have it of formations, thus -

“May my formations be this way
And may they not become that way” -
But as formations are not-self
They therefore cater to affliction

So it is not possible
To have it of formations, thus -
“May my formations be this way
And may they not become that way” -

And consciousness, then, is not-self
For thus if consciousness were self
It would not cater to affliction
So it would be possible

To have it thus of consciousness -
“I want my consciousness like this
So may it not become like that” -
But consciousness, then, is not-self

And so it caters to affliction
So it is not possible
To have it, then, of consciousness -
“I want my consciousness like this

So may it not become like that”...
And thus it is the aggregates
Should be discerned through wisdom, as
“Not I, not mine, and not my self”

From the Saṁyuttanikāya (abridged)

While dwelling in the Four Foundations
Ardent, firm, and resolute
Then should a pleasant feeling rise
A sister thus will understand -

“A pleasant feeling has arisen
That’s dependent, without self -
Dependent on this very body
Which is thus impermanent

Conditioned, thus, by other things -
So when this feeling has arisen
In dependence on a body
That’s impermanent, conditioned

And dependently arisen
How could it be permanent?”
She contemplates impermanence
Both in the body and in feeling

And she ponders vanishing
And fading off, cessation, and
She contemplates relinquishment
And as she dwells, her tendency

To lust towards the body, and then
In regard to pleasant feeling
Is abandoned, thus, by her -
While dwelling in the Four Foundations

Ardent, firm, and resolute
Then should a painful feeling rise
A sister thus will understand -
“A painful feeling has arisen

That’s dependent, without self -
Dependent on this very body
Which is thus impermanent
Conditioned, thus, by other things -

So when this feeling has arisen
In dependence on a body
That’s impermanent, conditioned
And dependently arisen

How could it be permanent?”
She contemplates impermanence
Both in the body and in feeling
And she ponders vanishing

And fading off, cessation, and
She contemplates relinquishment
And as she dwells, her tendency
To animosity towards

The body and to painful feeling
Is abandoned, thus, by her -
While dwelling in the Four Foundations
Ardent, firm, and resolute

Then should a neither-painful-nor
A-pleasant feeling thus arise
A sister thus will understand -
“A neither-painful-nor-a-pleasant

Feeling has therefore arisen
That’s dependent, without self -
Dependent on this very body
Which is thus impermanent

Conditioned, thus, by other things -
So when this feeling has arisen
In dependence on a body
That’s impermanent, conditioned

And dependently arisen
How could it be permanent?”
She contemplates impermanence
Both in the body and in feeling

And she ponders vanishing
And fading off, cessation, and
She contemplates relinquishment
And as she dwells, her tendency

To ignorance towards the body
In regard to neither-painful
Nor-a-pleasant feeling, therefore
Is abandoned, thus, by her

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

This knowledge of the dart's removal
Thus, the path I have proclaimed -
The effort must be made by you
For Buddhas can but point the way

From the Dhammapada

Oneself, indeed, must be one's refuge
For who else, then, could there be?
With oneself trained, in knowledge steeped
Then one obtains a refuge deep

From the Dhammapada

A sister who is full of joy
And certain of the Buddha's teaching
Will attain the peaceful state -
Formations stilled, a bliss supreme

From the Dhammapada

In town, in village, or in forest
On a hill or in a dale -
Wherever Arhats thus abide
Delightful, therefore, is that place

From the Dhammapada

For irrigators channel waters
Fletchers craft and straighten arrows
Carpenters construct with wood -
Yet Wise Ones cultivate the mind

From the Dhammapada

Just as the River Ganges flows
And slopes and winds, inclines towards
And merges with the ocean, thus
So too, the Buddha's dispensation

Made of those who have gone forth
As well as those who lead the home life
Slopes and winds, inclines towards
And merges with Nirvana, thus

From the Majjhimanikāya

A nun who knows that form is thus
Impermanent and prone to change
And also that it's terminal
Will see it as it truly is -

"For in the past and also now
All form is thus impermanent
And subject to disintegration
And its nature is to change" -

She thus abandons sorrow, pain
Despair, and lamentation, grief
And so she's not alarmed or frightened
Unafraid, she dwells in peace -

A nun who knows that feeling is
Impermanent and prone to change
And also that it's terminal
Will see it as it truly is -

"For in the past and also now
All feeling is impermanent
And subject to disintegration
And its nature is to change" -

She thus abandons sorrow, pain
Despair, and lamentation, grief
And so she's not alarmed or frightened
Unafraid, she dwells in peace -

A nun who knows perception is
Impermanent and prone to change
And also that it's terminal
Will see it as it truly is -

"For in the past and also now
Perception is impermanent
And subject to disintegration
And its nature is to change" -

She thus abandons sorrow, pain
Despair, and lamentation, grief
And so she's not alarmed or frightened
Unafraid, she dwells in peace -

A nun who knows volitions are
Impermanent and prone to change
And also that they're terminal
Will see them as they truly are -

"For in the past and also now
Volitions are impermanent
And subject to disintegration
And their nature is to change" -

She thus abandons sorrow, pain
Despair, and lamentation, grief
And so she's not alarmed or frightened
Unafraid, she dwells in peace -

A nun who knows that consciousness
Is transient and prone to change
And also that it's terminal
Will see it as it truly is -

"For in the past and also now
All consciousness is transient
And subject to disintegration
And its nature is to change" -

She thus abandons sorrow, pain
Despair, and lamentation, grief
And so she's not alarmed or frightened
Unafraid, she dwells in peace

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

For peace within is to be found
Where pain and agitation bide
It won't be found in glade or hill
And not by sage is it instilled

Where pain abides is where you'll find
Emancipation, thus, from pain -
The more you run away from it
The more you are exposed to pain

From the teachings of Venerable Ajahn Chah

A nun who searches for delight
In forms and sounds and odours, tastes
In tangibles and mental objects -
If she worries over them

And welcomes them, delight arises
With this, there's infatuation -
Bound by this attachment, then
This nun is dwelling with a friend -

For even though this sister dwells
In forest lodgings in seclusion
Craving also dwells therein
And so she's dwelling with a friend -

A nun who doesn't seek delight
In forms and sounds and odours, tastes
In tangibles and mental objects -
If she doesn't worry, thus

Nor welcome them, delight will cease
With this, there's no infatuation -
Thus released from all attachment
Such a sister dwells alone -

For even though this sister dwells
In villages, with monks and nuns
She has no craving yet therein
And so this sister dwells alone

From the Saṁyuttanikāya

The clearest place that we can see
And contemplate the truth of not-self
Is observing just our breath -
For when we turn attention to

The breath thereby, then we can see
It's just engaging in its function -
Breath goes in and then goes out
It rises, and then goes away

From the teachings of Venerable Ajahn Anan

O see this fancy mannequin
This body that is made of sores
Diseased, and yet obsessed over
Though none of it can last at all

O see this fancy mannequin
Adorned with gems and jewellery
A frame of bones encased in skin
Made pretty by its clothes, therein

Its gilded feet and powdered face
Its braided hair, and so much more
Seduces fools, but not those who
Are seeking thus the further shore

This rotting body all adorned
Just like a painted makeup box
Seduces fools, but not those who
Are seeking thus the further shore

The hunter laid his snare, and yet
The deer didn't spring the trap
I took the bait and now I go
To leave the hunter to bemoan

I see rich people in the world
Who do not share what they have earned
In greed, they hold onto their wealth
While ever lusting after more

A king who conquers earth by force
And rules the land from sea to sea
Unsatisfied with worldly life
Still hankers for the further shore

Not just the king, but others too
Meet death with craving yet incessant
Thus inflamed, they leave their corpse -
No satisfaction from the senses

Relatives lament and cry
"Alas! Our dearly loved has died!"
They wrap the body in a shroud
And burn it on a funeral mound

It's poked with stakes and burnt by fire
As all its wealth is left behind
And though the relatives surround
No shelter, therein, can be found

And while his heirs enjoy his wealth
He fares according to his deeds -
For wealth won't follow when you die
With wife and children left behind

There's no long life that comes from wealth
Nor can it drive old age away -
Short is this life, the sages say
The only thing it knows is change

Both rich and poor thus feel its touch
And fools and sages feel it too
But fools lie stricken by their folly -
Sages never tremble thus

For wisdom far surpasses wealth
And wisdom gains the final goal -
The ending of defilements, and
The greatest peace that one can know

From the Theragāthā (abridged)

O nuns, there are two things I know -
To never, therefore, be content
With wholesome states of mind achieved
And also to be unremitting

In the effort that's applied -
Accordingly, then, you should train -
"May I thus ever yearn and try
Let only skin and bones remain

Let flesh and blood all waste away
For there shall be no letting up
Of energy, 'til I achieve
The ultimate, through strength and zeal"

From the Aṅguttaranikāya

For mind can't see without an eye
Nor can the eye perceive an object
And yet through impingement, thus
Of door and object, one can see

By means of the eye-stimuli
Which is the base for consciousness -
And mind can't hear without an ear
Nor can the ear discern a sound

And yet it's through impingement, thus
Of door and object, one can hear
By means of the ear-stimuli
Which is the base for consciousness -

And mind can't smell without a nose
Nor can the nose detect an odour
And yet through impingement, thus
Of door and object, one can smell

By means of the nose-stimuli
Which is the base for consciousness -
And mind can't taste without a tongue
Nor can the tongue a flavour savour

And yet through impingement, thus
Of door and object, one can taste
By means of the tongue-stimuli
Which is the base for consciousness -

And mind can't touch without a body
Nor the body touch an object
And yet through impingement, thus
Of door and object, one can touch

By means of body-stimuli
Which is the base for consciousness -
And mind can't cognise of itself
Nor comprehend a mental object

And yet through impingement, thus
Of door and object, one cognises
Using the mind-stimuli
Which is the base for consciousness

Extrapolated from the 'Visuddhimagga,' Chapter I, 53

Wings of Freedom

A short, versified guide to the 37 Factors of Enlightenment, based on a series of teachings by Lama Choedak Rinpoche.

1 – Foundation

This fleeting life will soon be gone
And death will come to everyone -
For those who don't atone their sins
Another cycle will begin

And thus the Wheel of Life goes round
From highest heavens, and then down
To deepest hells and back again -
With urgency, you must begin

This lump of flesh, and blood, and bone
This putrid pile you call your own
Will rot, decay and fall apart
There's nothing you can take to heart

1. MINDFULNESS OF BODY

So like a surgeon, search inside
And see that foulness there resides
How can you love with such desire
This filth that ends up on the pyre?

1. MINDFULNESS OF BODY

Sensations too, will come and go
Like summer rain and winter snow
And where they start you cannot know -
Your freedom lies in letting go

2. MINDFULNESS OF FEELINGS

For suffering can be changed to bliss
Your buddhahood depends on this
And even people whom you hate
Can lead you into Wisdom's gate

2. MINDFULNESS OF FEELINGS

Yet mind is nowhere to be seen
Above, below, or in between
And all the thoughts that intervene
Are just projections on a screen -

3. MINDFULNESS OF MENTAL STATES

Upon the breath, let focus rest
And thereby sit and watch all else
And soon you'll find that non-formation
Is the same as concentration

3. MINDFULNESS OF MENTAL STATES

Thus, hold meditation fast
Avoiding future, present, past
For yesterday is just a myth -
Tomorrow simply can't exist — 3. MINDFULNESS OF MENTAL STATES

And all your thoughts are merely names
Imputed on dependent frames -
Just as a daughter and her mother
Don't exist without the other — 4. MINDFULNESS OF PHENOMENA

Likewise all the forms you see
Come into view anonymously
That lump of wood is not a table -
Untrained minds assign the label — 4. MINDFULNESS OF PHENOMENA

Ears don't hear without a sound
So their existence can't be found
And so it goes for all the senses -
Grasping objects is just nonsense — 4. MINDFULNESS OF PHENOMENA

2 – Exertion

Thus, with firm determination
Set upon elimination
Fix a laser on your thoughts
And burn away your inner flaws

So first of all, engage in purging
Stop bad habits from emerging -
Digging deep into illusion
Find the roots of your confusion — 5. PREVENTING NON-VIRTUES

Anywhere you feel a clinging
That should get alarm bells ringing -
Sensing envy, hate, or pride
Observe them and then step aside — 5. PREVENTING NON-VIRTUES

And as for habits that have hardened
Treat them as you would a garden -
Tangled weeds cannot survive
Whenever nourishment's deprived — 6. ABANDONING NON-VIRTUES

Thus, staying mindful night and day
Survey the rise and fall at play
If thirst appears, then let it pass
But that of non-self should be grasped

6. ABANDONING NON-VIRTUES

For in this way you generate
New virtue that you cultivate -
Into the mind-stream let it seep
So benefits for all are reaped

7. CULTIVATING NEW VIRTUES

And thus you find renunciation
Leading you to transformation -
Every challenge you are blessed
And ego more and more undressed

8. ENHANCING VIRTUES

3 – Support

Whenever, thus, you meet distraction
Deepen then your introspection -
Interrupt the interruptor
And become a ‘self-disruptor’

9. DETERMINATION

From this glimpse of deep insight, then
Energy will multiply -
With less indulgence comes more bliss
The more you are aware of this

9. DETERMINATION

Your joyfulness will then erupt
From all the karma you disrupt
Removing greed, and all resentment -
Raising a supreme contentment

10. DILIGENCE

Knowledge deep, therefore, endowed
Of everything that leads to now
Will look upon this point in time
As just a flash without a line

11. ATTENTION

From this your faith will then arise
In recollection of past lives
That interlock like dominoes
Within a mind that ever glows

11. ATTENTION

So hone your sharp discrimination
Break down all concatenation -
Down until there's nothing left
And you have sight of emptiness

12. ANALYSIS

4 – Power

You claim your birth right when you see
Appearance as illusory
Rejecting worldly condescension
As beguiled misapprehension

13. FAITH

Thus, you know that nothing's fixed
And nor can anything exist -
Nor can you say it can't exist
For any view is filled with risk

13. FAITH

And thus your freedom is asserted
All your disbelief deserted -
Wisdom has become a radar
Burning senses like a laser

14. DILIGENCE

When you gaze within you see
Your own responsibility
To turn and face causality
Thus, stretching through eternity

14. DILIGENCE

There's nothing you can truly hold
Within the stories you've been told
That burst like bubbles in a stream
And disappear into a dream

15. MINDFULNESS

Just like the countless beings who
Arouse compassion within you -
Although you vow to save them all
You know they have an empty core

15. MINDFULNESS

And it's their ignorance of this
That keeps their minds from knowing bliss
And so with strong determination
Strive to cultivate salvation

16. CONCENTRATION

Focus is the foe of doubt
While faith that knows the Truth abounds
Thus, built upon the deepest base
Belief like this can't be replaced — 16. CONCENTRATION

For you will find there no distraction
Only room for perfect action
Fueled by your impermanence
And strengthening your diligence — 17. WISDOM

For in both rest and active times
All benefits are multiplied
And though you may not move a mountain
Holiness springs like a fountain — 17. WISDOM

5 – Strength

Don't find Truth within these words
Don't look for sound in what you heard
Don't cloud your mind with this or that -
Don't ponder, ask, or meditate — 18. FAITH

For thus it is the Noble Ones
The Truth Transcendent, they pass on
The Sangha, in their blessedness
Incite the deepest joyfulness — 18. FAITH

Thus, every effort filled with bliss
No doubt, or guilt, to reminisce -
Relinquishing is still an action
With the deepest satisfaction — 19. DILIGENCE

Now you know that there's no way
That concentration goes away
And nevermore your mind will slip
For all distractions have been stripped — 19. DILIGENCE

Imbued with ceaseless selflessness
Compassion in its endlessness
The power of mindfulness is sweet -
The heartiest nectar you can eat — 20. MINDFULNESS

In union deep, you now abide
In clarity and sharp insight — 20. MINDFULNESS
In all you see, the Truth resides -
The outer is the same inside

And nowhere can the self be found
In form, or feeling, or in sound - — 21. CONCENTRATION
For everything is meditation
With no differentiation

Grasping self, you look for trouble
Emptiness will burst the bubble — 21. CONCENTRATION
Form and feelings, all are hollow -
Knowing this, salvation follows

Without self, there is no fear
That everything will disappear - — 22. WISDOM
The only truth that thus resides
Is that impermanence abides

6 – Wings

In non-attachment lies relief
From clinging to a world of grief - — 23. MINDFULNESS
For how can you have any fear
Of losing something that's not here?

And how could you not be alone?
Without a self there is no home - — 23. MINDFULNESS
Rejoice in silent solitude
Let deep contentment filter through

Thus, matchless now in all directions
Mind abiding in perfection — 24. WISDOM
All results have thus been learned
For now the cause has been discerned

Throughout the levels of your view
Your obscurations are removed - — 25. DILIGENCE
In diligence of observation
Reach the peak of culmination

As the body falls away
You find that rapture takes its place -
No obstacles obscure your senses
Clearest views destroy defences

26. RAPTURE

Joyfulness is your reward
In emptiness there are no words -
No form, no feeling, taste, or smell
In selflessness your joy will swell

27. PLIANCY

Thus, seeing nature as it is -
No distance between that or this -
For mindfulness is your addiction
Based upon destroyed afflictions

28. CONCENTRATION

Rest within this natural state
Thus, free from madness, love, and hate -
No contrast between loss and gain
All hopes and fears are the same

29. EQUANIMITY

7 – Path

The sword of Truth has sliced away
Dominion of the aggregates
Eradicating ignorance
Devoid of any permanence

30. RIGHT VIEW

No object, therefore, to perceive
Or thus a subject to receive -
Abide in space-like meditation
Where no thoughts have validation

31. RIGHT THOUGHT

As the mind now sees the Truth
So, too, your words will follow through -
To know there's nothing you can preach
Is thus the only valid speech

32. RIGHT SPEECH

Thus, harmless and benevolent
Of liberation redolent
Non-action is the way to lead -
Devoid of hunger, thirst, or need

33. RIGHT ACTION

And relishing felicity
Abiding in simplicity -
Upon the breath it all works out
Within a state devoid of doubt

34. RIGHT LIVELIHOOD

For streamlined is the diligence
Eliminating negligence -
All effort flowing like a river
Nothing missed or wasted, either

35. RIGHT EFFORT

Recollecting all past lives
And knowing where the future lies
You verify impermanence
And hunger for enlightenment

36. RIGHT MINDFULNESS

In perfect union, thus abide
Tranquillity, and deep insight -
Perceiving dharmas as they are
Without conception, near and far

37. RIGHT CONCENTRATION

Thus, light of heart and full of joy
The deepest bliss can be enjoyed -
On wings of freedom, thereby fly
Upon this endless, unborn mind

Dedication

And may all beings now who suffer
Find relief in boundless measure
May their joy know no decline
Thus, in a long continued line

Wherever now they all reside
May they perceive the Dharma's light -
In all Samsara, may they see
Impermanence, and thus be free

And may they never suffer pain
Nirvana, swiftly, may they gain -
And may all wishes be fulfilled
And all the realms be free from ill